The Life and Writings

of

Eusebius of Cæsarea

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&

Life of the Emperor Constantine

By

Eusebius of Cæsarea

With the Oration of Constantine to the Assembly of the Saints,
and the Oration of Eusebius in praise of Constantine.

A Revised Translation with Prolegomena and Notes,
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The Life & Works of Eusebius of Cæsarea

Preface

The present translation of the Church History of Eusebius has been made from Heinichen's second edition of the Greek text, but variant readings have been adopted without hesitation whenever they have approved themselves to my judgment. In all such cases the variation from Heinichen's text has been indicated in the notes. A simple revision of Crusè's English version was originally proposed, but a brief examination of it was sufficient to convince me that a satisfactory revision would be an almost hopeless task, and that nothing short of a new and independent translation ought to be undertaken. In the preparation of that translation, invaluable assistance has been rendered by my father, the Rev. Joseph N. McGiffert, D.D., for whose help and counsel I desire thus publicly to give expression to my profound gratitude. The entire translation has been examined by him and owes much to his timely suggestions and criticisms; while the translation itself of a considerable portion of the work (Bks. V.–VIII. and the Martyrs of Palestine) is from his hand. The part thus rendered by him I have carefully revised for the purpose of securing uniformity in style and expression throughout the entire work, and I therefore hold myself alone responsible for it as well as for the earlier and later books. As to the principle upon which the translation has been made, little need be said. The constant endeavor has been to reproduce as nearly as possible, both the substance and form of the original, and in view of the peculiar need of accuracy in such a work as the present, it has seemed better in doubtful cases to run the risk of erring in the direction of over-literalness rather than in that of undue license.

A word of explanation in regard to the notes which accompany the text may not be out of place. In view of the popular character of the series of which the present volume forms a part, it seemed important that the notes should contain much supplementary information in regard to persons, places, and events mentioned in the text which might be quite superfluous to the professional historian as well as to the student enjoying access to

libraries rich in historical and bibliographical material, and I have therefore not felt justified in confining myself to such questions as might interest only the critical scholar. Requested by the general editor to make the work in some sense a general history of, or historical commentary upon, the first three centuries of the Christian Church, I have ventured to devote considerable space to a fuller presentation of various subjects but briefly touched upon or merely referred to by Eusebius. At the same time my chief endeavor has been, by a careful study of difficult and disputed points, to do all that I could for their elucidation, and thus to perform as faithfully as possible the paramount duty of a commentator. The number and fulness of the notes needed in such a work must of course be matter of dispute, but annoyed as I have repeatedly been by the fragmentary character of the annotations in the existing editions of the work, I have been anxious to avoid that defect, and have therefore passed by no passage which seemed to me to need discussion, nor consciously evaded any difficulty. Working with historical students constantly in mind I have felt it due to them to fortify all my statements by references to the authorities upon which they have been based, and to indicate at the same time with sufficient fullness the sources whose examination a fuller investigation of the subject on their part might render necessary. The modern works which have been most helpful are mentioned in the notes, but I cannot in justice refrain from making especial reference at this point to Smith and Wace's *Dictionary of Christian Biography* which has been constantly at my side, and to the first and second volumes of Schaff's *Church History*, whose bibliographies have been especially serviceable. Many of Valesius' notes have been found very suggestive and must always remain valuable in spite of the great advance made in historical knowledge since his day. For the commentary of Heinichen less can be said. Richardson's *Bibliographical Synopsis*, published as a supplement to the Ante-Nicene Library, did not come into my hands until the greater part of the work was completed. In the preparation of the notes upon the latter portion it proved helpful, and its existence has enabled me throughout the work to omit extended lists of books which it would otherwise have been necessary to give.

It was my privilege some three years ago to study portions of the fourth and fifth books of Eusebius' Church History with Professor Adolf Harnack in his *Seminar* at Marburg. Especial thanks are due for the help and

inspiration gained from that eminent scholar, and for the light thrown by him upon many difficult passages in those portions of the work.

It gives me pleasure also to express my obligation to Dr. Isaac G. Hall, of New York, and to Dr. E. C. Richardson, of Hartford, for information furnished by them in regard to certain editions of the History, also to the Rev. Charles R. Gillett, Librarian of Union Theological Seminary, and to the Rev. J. H. Dulles, Librarian of Princeton Theological Seminary, for their kindness in granting me the privileges of the libraries under their charge, and for their unfailing courtesy shown me in many ways. To Mr. James McDonald, of Shelbyville, Ky., my thanks are due for his translation of the Testimonies for and against Eusebius, printed at the close of the Prolegomena, and to Mr. F. E. Moore, of New Albany, Ind., for assistance rendered in connection with the preparation of the indexes.

Arthur Cushman, McGiffert.
Lane Theological Seminary,
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Chapter I - The Life of Eusebius.

§1. *Eusebius' Birth and Training. His Life in Cæsarea until the Outbreak of the Persecution.*

Our author was commonly known among the ancients as Eusebius of Cæsarea or Eusebius Pamphili. The former designation arose from the fact that he was bishop of the church in Cæsarea for many years; the latter from the fact that he was the intimate friend and devoted admirer of Pamphilus, a presbyter of Cæsarea and a martyr. Some such specific appellation was necessary to distinguish him from others of the same name. Smith and Wace's *Dictionary of Christian Biography* mentions 137 men of the first eight centuries who bore the name Eusebius, and of these at least forty were contemporaries of our author. The best known among them were Eusebius of Nicomedia (called by Arius the brother of Eusebius of Cæsarea), Eusebius of Emesa, and Eusebius of Samosata.

The exact date of our author's birth is unknown to us, but his *Ecclesiastical History* contains notices which enable us to fix it approximately. In *H. E.* V. 28 he reports that Paul of Samosata attempted to revive again in his day (καθ' ἡμᾶς) the heresy of Artemon. But Paul of Samosata was deposed from the episcopate of Antioch in 272, and was condemned as a heretic at least as early as 268, so that Eusebius must have been born before the latter date, if his words are to be strictly interpreted. Again, according to *H. E.* III. 28, Dionysius was bishop of Alexandria in Eusebius' time (καθ' ἡμᾶς). But Dionysius was bishop from 247 or 248 to 265, and therefore if Eusebius' words are to be interpreted strictly here as in the former case, he must have been born before 265. On the other hand, inasmuch as his death occurred about 340, we cannot throw his birth much earlier than 260. It is true that the references to Paul and to Dionysius do not prove conclusively that Eusebius was alive in their day, for his words may have been used in a loose sense. But in *H. E.* VII. 26, just before proceeding to give an account of Paul of Samosata, he draws the line between his own and the preceding generation, declaring that he is now about to relate the events of his own age (τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς). This still

further confirms the other indications, and we shall consequently be safe in concluding that Eusebius was born not far from the year 260 A.D. His birthplace cannot be determined with certainty. The fact that he is called "Eusebius the Palestinian" by Marcellus (*Euseb. lib. adv. Marcell.* I. 4), Basil (*Lib. ad. Amphil. de Spir. Sancto*, c. 29), and others, does not prove that he was a Palestinian by birth; for the epithet may be used to indicate merely his place of residence (he was bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine for many years). Moreover, the argument urged by Stein and Lightfoot in support of his Palestinian birth, namely, that it was customary to elect to the episcopate of any church a native of the city in preference to a native of some other place, does not count for much. All that seems to have been demanded was that a man should have been already a member of the particular church over which he was to be made bishop, and even this rule was not universal (see Bingham's *Antiquities*, II. 10, 2 and 3). The fact that he was bishop of Cæsarea therefore would at most warrant us in concluding only that he had made his residence in Cæsarea for some time previous to his election to that office. Nevertheless, although neither of these arguments proves his Palestinian birth, it is very probable that he was a native of that country, or at least of that section. He was acquainted with Syriac as well as with Greek, which circumstance taken in connection with his ignorance of Latin (see below, p. 47) points to the region of Syria as his birthplace. Moreover, we learn from his own testimony that he was in Cæsarea while still a youth (*Vita Constantini*, I. 19), and in his epistle to the church of Cæsarea (see below, p. 16) he says that he was taught the creed of the Cæsarean church in his childhood (or at least at the beginning of his Christian life; ἐν τῇ κατηχήσει), and that he accepted it at baptism. It would seem therefore that he must have lived while still a child either in Cæsarea itself, or in the neighborhood, where its creed was in use. Although no one therefore (except Theodorus Metochita of the fourteenth century, in his *Cap. Miscell. 17;* Migne, *Patr. Lat.* CXLIV. 949) directly states that Eusebius was a Palestinian by birth, we have every reason to suppose him such.

His parents are entirely unknown. Nicephorus Callistus (*H. E.* VI. 37) reports that his mother was a sister of Pamphilus. He does not mention his authority for this statement, and it is extremely unlikely, in the face of the silence of Eusebius himself and of all other writers, that it is true. It is far

more probable that the relationship was later assumed to account for the close intimacy of the two men. Arius, in an epistle addressed to Eusebius of Nicomedia (contained in Theodoret's *Hist. Eccles*. I. 5), calls Eusebius of Cæsarea the latter's brother. It is objected to this that Eusebius of Nicomedia refers to Eusebius of Cæsarea on one occasion as his "master" (τοῦ δεσπότου μου, in his epistle to Paulinus contained in Theodoret's *Hist. Eccles*. I. 6), and that on the other hand Eusebius of Cæsarea calls Eusebius of Nicomedia, "the great Eusebius" (*Euseb. lib. adv. Marcell*. I. 4), both of which expressions seem inconsistent with brotherhood. Lightfoot justly remarks that neither the argument itself nor the objections carry much weight. The term ἀδελφός may well have been used to indicate merely theological or ecclesiastical association, while on the other hand, brotherhood would not exclude the form of expression employed by each in speaking of the other. Of more weight is the fact that neither Eusebius himself nor any historian of that period refers to such a relationship, and also the unlikelihood that two members of one family should bear the same name.

From Eusebius' works we gather that he must have received an extensive education both in secular philosophy and in Biblical and theological science. Although his immense erudition was doubtless the result of wide and varied reading continued throughout life, it is highly probable that he acquired the taste for such reading in his youth. Who his early instructors were we do not know, and therefore cannot estimate the degree of their influence over him. As he was a man, however, who cherished deep admiration for those whom he regarded as great and good men, and as he possessed an unusually acquisitive mind and a pliant disposition, we should naturally suppose that his instructors must have possessed considerable influence over him, and that his methods of study in later years must have been largely molded by their example and precept. We see this exemplified in a remarkable degree in the influence exerted over him by Pamphilus, his dearest friend, and at the same time the preceptor, as it were, of his early manhood. Certainly this great bibliophilist must have done much to strengthen Eusebius' natural taste for omnivorous reading, and the opportunities afforded by his grand library for the cultivation of such a taste were not lost. To the influence of Pamphilus, the devoted admirer and enthusiastic champion of Origen, was doubtless due also in

large measure the deep respect which Eusebius showed for that illustrious Father, a respect to which we owe one of the most delightful sections of his Church History, his long account of Origen in the sixth book, and to which in part antiquity was indebted for the elaborate *Defense of Origen,* composed by Pamphilus and himself, but unfortunately no longer extant. Eusebius certainly owed much to the companionship of that eager student and noble Christian hero, and he always recognized with deep gratitude his indebtedness to him. (Compare the account of Pamphilus given below in Bk. VII. chap. 32, §25 sq.) The names of his earlier instructors, who were eminently successful, at least in fostering his thirst for knowledge, are quite unknown to us. His abiding admiration for Plato, whom he always placed at the head of all philosophers (see Stein, p. 6), would lead us to think that he received at least a part of his secular training from some ardent Platonist, while his intense interest in apologetics, which lasted throughout his life, and which affected all his works, seems to indicate the peculiar bent of his early Christian education. Trithemius concluded from a passage in his *History* (VII. 32) that Eusebius was a pupil of the learned Dorotheus of Antioch, and Valesius, Lightfoot and others are apparently inclined to accept his conclusion. But, as Stroth remarks (*Eusebii Kirchengeschichte,* p. xix), all that Eusebius says is that he had heard Dorotheus expound the Scriptures in the church (τούτου μετρίως τὰς γραφὰς ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας διηγουμένου κατηκούσαμεν), that is, that he had heard him preach. To conclude from this statement that he was a pupil of Dorotheus is certainly quite unwarranted.

Stroth's suggestion that he probably enjoyed the instruction of Meletius for seven years during the persecution rests upon no good ground, for the passage which he relies upon to sustain his opinion (*H. E.* VII. 32. 28) says only that Eusebius "observed Meletius well" (κατενοήσαμεν) during those seven years.

In Cæsarea Eusebius was at one time a presbyter of the church, as we may gather from his words in the epistle to that church already referred to, where, in speaking of the creed, he says, "As we believed and taught in the presbytery and in the episcopate itself." But the attempt to fix the date of his ordination to that office is quite vain. It is commonly assumed that he became presbyter while Agapius was bishop of Cæsarea, and this is not unlikely, though we possess no proof of it (upon Agapius see below, *H. E.*

VII. 32, note 39). In his *Vita Constantini,* I. 19, Eusebius reports that he saw Constantine for the first time in Cæsarea in the train of the Emperor Diocletian. In his *Chron*. Eusebius reports that Diocletian made an expedition against Egypt, which had risen in rebellion in the year 296 A.D., and Theophanes, in his *Chron.*, says that Constantine accompanied him. It is probable therefore that it was at this time that Eusebius first saw Constantine in Cæsarea, when he was either on his way to Egypt, or on his way back (see Tillemont's *Hist. des Emp.,* IV. p. 34).

During these years of quiet, before the great persecution of Diocletian, which broke out in 303 A.D., Eusebius' life must have been a very pleasant one. Pamphilus' house seems to have been a sort of rendezvous for Christian scholars, perhaps a regular divinity school; for we learn from Eusebius' *Martyrs in Palestine* (Cureton's edition, pp. 13 and 14) that he and a number of others, including the martyr Apphianus, were living together in one house at the time of the persecution, and that the latter was instructed in the Scriptures by Pamphilus and acquired from him virtuous habits and conduct. The great library of Pamphilus would make his house a natural center for theological study, and the immense amount of work which was done by him, or under his direction, in the reproduction of copies of the Holy Scriptures, of Origen's works (see Jerome's *de vir. ill.* 75 and 81, and *contra Ruf.* I. 9), and in other literary employments of the same kind, makes it probable that he had gathered about him a large circle of friends and students who assisted him in his labors and profited by his counsel and instruction. Amidst these associations Eusebius passed his early manhood, and the intellectual stimulus thus given him doubtless had much to do with his future career. He was above all a literary man, and remained such to the end of his life. The pleasant companionships of these days, and the mutual interest and sympathy which must have bound those fellow-students and fellow-disciples of Pamphilus very close together, perhaps had much to do with that broad-minded spirit of sympathy and tolerance which so characterized Eusebius in later years. He was always as far as possible from the character of a recluse. He seems ever to have been bound by very strong ties to the world itself and to his fellow-men. Had his earlier days been filled with trials and hardships, with the bitterness of disappointed hopes and unfulfilled ambitions, with harsh experiences of others' selfishness and treachery, who shall say that the whole course of his life

might not have been changed, and his writings have exhibited an entirely different spirit from that which is now one of their greatest charms? Certainly he had during these early years in Cæsarea large opportunities for cultivating that natural trait of admiration for other men, which was often so strong as to blind him even to their faults, and that natural kindness which led him to see good wherever it existed in his Christian brethren. At the same time these associations must have had considerable influence in fostering the apologetic temper. The pursuits of the little circle were apparently exclusively Christian, and in that day when Christianity stood always on its defense, it would naturally become to them a sacred duty to contribute to that defense and to employ all their energies in the task. It has been remarked that the apologetic temper is very noticeable in Eusebius' writings. It is more than that; we may say indeed in general terms that everything he wrote was an apology for the faith. His *History* was written avowedly with an apologetic purpose, his *Chronicle* was composed with the same end in view. Even when pronouncing a eulogy upon a deceased emperor he seized every possible opportunity to draw from that emperor's career, and from the circumstances of his reign, arguments for the truth and grandeur of the Christian religion. His natural temper of mind and his early training may have had much to do with this habit of thought, but certainly those years with Pamphilus and his friends in Cæsarea must have emphasized and developed it.

Another characteristic which Pamphilus and the circle that surrounded him doubtless did something to develop in our author was a certain superiority to the trammels of mere traditionalism, or we might perhaps better say that they in some measure checked the opposite tendency of slavishness to the traditional which seems to have been natural to him. Pamphilus' deep reverence for Origen proclaims him at once superior to that kind of narrow conservatism which led many men as learned and doubtless as conscientious as himself to pass severe and unconditional condemnation upon Origen and all his teaching. The effect of championing his cause must have fostered in this little circle, which was a very hotbed of Origenism, a contempt for the narrow and unfair judgments of mere traditionalists, and must have led them to seek in some degree the truth solely for its own sake, and to become in a measure careless of its relation to the views of any school or church. It could hardly be otherwise than that

the free and fearless spirit of Origen should leave its impress through his writings upon a circle of followers so devoted to him as were these Cæsarean students. Upon the impressionable Eusebius these influences necessarily operated. And yet he brought to them no keen speculative powers, no deep originality such as Origen himself possessed. His was essentially an acquisitive, not a productive mind, and hence it was out of the question that he should become a second Origen. It was quite certain that Origen's influence over him would weaken somewhat his confidence in the traditional as such—a confidence which is naturally great in such minds as his—but at the same time would do little to lessen the real power of the past over him. He continued to get his truth from others, from the great men of the past with whom he had lived and upon whose thought he had feasted. All that he believed he had drawn from them; he produced nothing new for himself, and his creed was a traditional creed. And yet he had at the same time imbibed from his surroundings the habit of questioning and even criticising the past, and, in spite of his abiding respect for it, had learned to feel that the voice of the many is not always the voice of truth, and that the widely and anciently accepted is sometimes to be corrected by the clearer sight of a single man. Though he therefore depended for all he believed so completely upon the past, his associations had helped to free him from a slavish adherence to all that a particular school had accepted, and had made him in some small measure an eclectic in his relations to doctrines and opinions of earlier generations. A notable instance of this eclecticism on his part is seen in his treatment of the Apocalypse of John. He felt the force of an almost universal tradition in favor of its apostolic origin, and yet in the face of that he could listen to the doubts of Dionysius, and could be led by his example, in a case where his own dissatisfaction with the book acted as an incentive, almost, if not quite, to reject it and to ascribe it to another John. Instances of a similar mode of conduct on his part are quite numerous. While he is always a staunch apologist for Christianity, he seldom, if ever, degenerates into a mere partisan of any particular school or sect.

One thing in fact which is particularly noticeable in Eusebius' works is the comparatively small amount of time and space which he devotes to heretics. With his wide and varied learning and his extensive acquaintance with the past, he had opportunities for successful heresy hunting such as

few possessed, and yet he never was a heresy hunter in any sense. This is surprising when we remember what a fascination this employment had for so many scholars of his own age, and when we realize that his historical tastes and talents would seem to mark him out as just the man for that kind of work. May it not be that the lofty spirit of Origen, animating that Cæsarean school, had something to do with the happy fact that he became an apologist instead of a mere polemic, that he chose the honorable task of writing a history of the Church instead of anticipating Epiphanius' Panarium?

It was not that he was not alive to the evils of heresy. He shared with nearly all good church-men of his age an intense aversion for those who, as he believed, had corrupted the true Gospel of Christ. Like them he ascribed heresy to the agency of the evil one, and was no more able than they to see any good in a man whom he looked upon as a real heretic, or to do justice in any degree to the error which he taught. His condemnations of heretics in his *Church History* are most severe. Language is hardly strong enough to express his aversion for them. And yet, although he is thus most thoroughly the child of his age, the difference between him and most of his contemporaries is very apparent. He mentions these heretics only to dismiss them with disapproval or condemnation. He seldom, if ever, discusses and refutes their views. His interests lie evidently in other directions; he is concerned with higher things. A still more strongly marked difference between himself and many churchmen of his age lies in his large liberality towards those of his own day who differed with him in minor points of faith, and his comparative indifference to the divergence of views between the various parties in the Church. In all this we believe is to be seen not simply the inherent nature of the man, but that nature as trained in the school of Pamphilus, the disciple of Origen.

§2. *The Persecution of Diocletian.*

In this delightful circle and engaged in such congenial tasks, the time must have passed very happily for Eusebius, until, in 303, the terrible persecution of Diocletian broke upon the Church almost like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky. The causes of the sudden change of policy on Diocletian's part, and the terrible havoc wrought in the Church, it is not my

intention to discuss here (see below, Bk. VIII. chap. 2, note 3 sq.). We are concerned with the persecution only in so far as it bears upon the present subject. In the first year of the persecution Procopius, the first martyr of Palestine, was put to death at Cæsarea (Eusebius' *Martyrs of Palestine,* Cureton's ed. p. 4), and from that time on that city, which was an important Christian center, was the scene of a tempest which raged with greater or less violence, and with occasional cessations, for seven years. Eusebius himself was an eyewitness of many martyrdoms there, of which he gives us an account in his *Martyrs of Palestine*. The little circle which surrounded Pamphilus did not escape. In the third year of the persecution (*Mart. of Pal*. p. 12 sq.) a youth named Apphianus, or Epiphanius (the former is given in the Greek text, the latter in the Syriac), who "resided in the same house with us, confirming himself in godly doctrine, and being instructed by that perfect martyr, Pamphilus" (as Eusebius says), committed an act of fanatical daring which caused his arrest and martyrdom. It seems that without the knowledge of his friends, concealing his design even from those who dwelt in the same house with him, he laid hold of the hand of the governor, Arbanus, who was upon the point of sacrificing, and endeavored to dissuade him from offering to "lifeless idols and wicked devils." His arrest was of course the natural consequence, and he had the glory of witnessing a good profession and suffering a triumphant death. Although Eusebius speaks with such admiration of his conduct, it is quite significant of the attitude of himself, and of most of the circle of which he was one, that Apphianus felt obliged to conceal his purpose from them. He doubtless feared that they would not permit him to perform the rash act which he meditated, and we may conclude from that, that the circle in the main was governed by the precepts of good common sense, and avoided that fanaticism which so frequently led men, as in the present case it led Apphianus, to expose themselves needlessly, and even to court martyrdom. It is plain enough from what we know of Eusebius' general character that he himself was too sensible to act in that way. It is true that he speaks with admiration of Apphianus' conduct, and in *H. E*. VIII. 5, of the equally rash procedure of a Nicomedian Christian; but that does not imply that he considered their course the wisest one, and that he would not rather recommend the employment of all proper and honorable precautions for the preservation of life. Indeed, in *H. E.* IV. 15, he speaks with evident

approval of the prudent course pursued by Polycarp in preserving his life so long as he could without violating his Christian profession, and with manifest disapproval of the rash act of the Phrygian Quintus, who presumptuously courted martyrdom, only to fail when the test itself came. Pamphilus also possessed too much sound Christian sense to advocate any such fanaticism, or to practice it himself, as is plain enough from the fact that he was not arrested until the fifth year of the persecution. This unhealthy temper of mind in the midst of persecution was indeed almost universally condemned by the wisest men of the Church, and yet the boldness and the very rashness of those who thus voluntarily and needlessly threw their lives away excited widespread admiration and too often a degree of commendation which served only to promote a wider growth of the same unhealthy sentiment.

In the fifth year of the persecution Pamphilus was arrested and thrown into prison, where he remained for two years, when he finally, in the seventh year of the persecution, suffered martyrdom with eleven others, some of whom were his disciples and members of his own household. (*Pal. Mart.* Cureton's ed. p. 36 sq.; *H. E.* App. chap. 11.) During the two years of Pamphilus' imprisonment Eusebius spent a great deal of time with him, and the two together composed five books of an *Apology for Origen*, to which Eusebius afterward added a sixth (see below, p. 36). Danz (p. 37) assumes that Eusebius was imprisoned with Pamphilus, which is not an unnatural supposition when we consider how much they must have been together to compose the *Apology* as they did. There is, however, no other evidence that he was thus imprisoned, and in the face of Eusebius' own silence it is safer perhaps to assume (with most historians) that he simply visited Pamphilus in his prison. How it happened that Pamphilus and so many of his followers were imprisoned and martyred, while Eusebius escaped, we cannot tell. In his *Martyrs of Palestine*, chap. 11, he states that Pamphilus was the only one of the company of twelve martyrs that was a presbyter of the Cæsarean church; and from the fact that he nowhere mentions the martyrdom of others of the presbyters, we may conclude that they all escaped. It is not surprising, therefore, that Eusebius should have done the same. Nevertheless, it is somewhat difficult to understand how he could come and go so frequently without being arrested and condemned to a like fate with the others. It is possible that he possessed

friends among the authorities whose influence procured his safety. This supposition finds some support in the fact that he had made the acquaintance of Constantine (the Greek in *Vita Const*. I. 19 has ἔγνωμεν, which implies, as Danz remarks, that he not only saw, but that he became acquainted with Constantine) some years before in Cæsarea. He could hardly have made his acquaintance unless he had some friend among the high officials of the city. Influential family connections may account in part also for the position of prominence which he later acquired at the imperial court of Constantine. If he had friends in authority in Cæsarea during the persecution his exemption from arrest is satisfactorily accounted for. It has been supposed by some that Eusebius denied the faith during the terrible persecution, or that he committed some other questionable and compromising act of concession, and thus escaped martyrdom. In support of this is urged the fact that in 335, at the council of Tyre, Potamo, bishop of Heraclea, in Egypt, addressed Eusebius in the following words: "Dost thou sit as judge, O Eusebius; and is Athanasius, innocent as he is, judged by thee? Who can bear such things? Pray tell me, wast thou not with me in prison during the persecution? And I lost an eye in behalf of the truth, but thou appearest to have received no bodily injury, neither hast thou suffered martyrdom, but thou hast remained alive with no mutilation. How wast thou released from prison unless thou didst promise those that put upon us the pressure of persecution to do that which is unlawful, or didst actually do it?" Eusebius, it seems, did not deny the charge, but simply rose in anger and dismissed the council with the words, "If ye come hither and make such accusations against us, then do your accusers speak the truth. For if ye tyrannize here, much more do ye in your own country" (Epiphan. *Hær*. LXVIII. 8). It must be noticed, however, that Potamo does not directly charge Eusebius with dishonorable conduct, he simply conjectures that he must have acted dishonorably in order to escape punishment; as if every one who was imprisoned with Potamo must have suffered as he did! As Stroth suggests, it is quite possible that his peculiarly excitable and violent temperament was one of the causes of his own loss. He evidently in any case had no knowledge of unworthy conduct on Eusebius' part, nor had any one else so far as we can judge. For in that age of bitter controversy, when men's characters were drawn by their opponents in the blackest lines, Eusebius must have suffered at the hands of the Athanasian

party if it had been known that he had acted a cowardly part in the persecution. Athanasius himself refers to this incident (*Contra Arian.* VIII. 1), but he only says that Eusebius was "accused of sacrificing," he does not venture to affirm that he did sacrifice; and thus it is evident that he knew nothing of such an act. Moreover, he never calls Eusebius "the sacrificer," as he does Asterius, and as he would have been sure to do had he possessed evidence which warranted him in making the accusation (cf. Lightfoot, p. 311). Still further, Eusebius' subsequent election to the episcopate of Cæsarea, where his character and his conduct during the persecution must have been well known, and his appointment in later life to the important see of Antioch, forbid the supposition that he had ever acted a cowardly part in time of persecution. And finally, it is psychologically impossible that Eusebius could have written works so full of comfort for, and sympathy with, the suffering confessors, and could have spoken so openly and in such strong terms of condemnation of the numerous defections that occurred during the persecution, if he was conscious of his own guilt. It is quite possible, as remarked above, that influential friends protected him without any act of compromise on his part; or, supposing him to have been imprisoned with Potamo, it may be, as Lightfoot suggests, that the close of the persecution brought him his release as it did so many others. For it would seem natural to refer that imprisonment to the latter part of the persecution, when in all probability he visited Egypt, which was the home of Potamo. We must in any case vindicate Eusebius from the unfounded charge of cowardice and apostasy; and we ask, with Cave, "If every accusation against any man at any time were to be believed, who would be guiltless?"

From his *History* and his *Martyrs in Palestine* we learn that Eusebius was for much of the time in the very thick of the fight, and was an eyewitness of numerous martyrdoms not only in Palestine, but also in Tyre and in Egypt.

The date of his visits to the latter places (*H. E.* VIII. 7, 9) cannot be determined with exactness. They are described in connection with what seem to be the earlier events of the persecution, and yet it is by no means certain that chronological order has been observed in the narratives. The mutilation of prisoners—such as Potamo suffered—seems to have become common only in the year 308 and thereafter (see Mason's *Persecution of*

Diocletian, p. 281), and hence if Eusebius was imprisoned with Potamo during his visit to Egypt, as seems most probable, there would be some reason for assigning that visit to the later years of the persecution. In confirmation of this might be urged the improbability that he would leave Cæsarea while Pamphilus was still alive, either before or after the latter's imprisonment, and still further his own statement in *H. E.* VII. 32, that he had observed Meletius escaping the fury of the persecution for seven years in Palestine. It is therefore likely that Eusebius did not make his journey to Egypt, which must have occupied some time, until toward the very end of the persecution, when it raged there with exceeding fierceness during the brief outburst of the infamous Maximin.

§3. *Eusebius' Accession to the Bishopric of Cæsarea.*

Not long after the close of the persecution, Eusebius became bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, his own home, and held the position until his death. The exact date of his accession cannot be ascertained, indeed we cannot say that it did not take place even before the close of the persecution, but that is hardly probable; in fact, we know of no historian who places it earlier than 313. His immediate predecessor in the episcopate was Agapius, whom he mentions in terms of praise in *H. E.* VII. 32. Some writers have interpolated a bishop Agricolaus between Agapius and Eusebius (see *e.g.* Tillemont, *Hist. Eccles.* VII. 42), on the ground that his name appears in one of the lists of those present at the Council of Ancyra (c. 314), as bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine (see *Labbei et Cossartii Conc.* I. 1475). But, as Hefele shows (*Conciliengesch.* I. 220), this list is of late date and not to be relied upon. On the other hand, as Lightfoot points out, in the *Libellus Synodicus* (*Conc*. I. 1480), where Agricolaus is said to have been present at the Council of Ancyra, he is called bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia; and this statement is confirmed by a Syriac list given in Cowper's *Miscellanies,* p. 41. Though perhaps no great reliance is to be placed upon the correctness of any of these lists, the last two may at any rate be set over against the first, and we may conclude that there exists no ground for assuming that Agapius, who is the last Cæsarean bishop mentioned by Eusebius, was not the latter's immediate predecessor. At what time Agapius died we do not know. That he suffered martyrdom is hardly likely, in view of Eusebius' silence on the

subject. It would seem more likely that he outlived the persecution. However that may be, Eusebius was already bishop at the time of the dedication of a new and elegant Church at Tyre under the direction of his friend Paulinus, bishop of that city. Upon this occasion he delivered an address of considerable length, which he has inserted in his *Ecclesiastical History,* Bk. X. chap. 4. He does not name himself as its author, but the way in which he introduces it, and the very fact that he records the whole speech without giving the name of the man who delivered it, make its origin perfectly plain. Moreover, the last sentence of the preceding chapter makes it evident that the speaker was a bishop: "Every one of the rulers (ἀρχόντων) present delivered panegyric discourses." The date of the dedication of this church is a matter of dispute, though it is commonly put in the year 315. It is plain from Eusebius' speech that it was uttered before Licinius had begun to persecute the Christians, and also, as Görres remarks, at a time when Constantine and Licinius were at least outwardly at peace with each other. In the year 314 the two emperors went to war, and consequently, if the persecution of Licinius began soon after that event, as it is commonly supposed to have done, the address must have been delivered before hostilities opened; that is, at least as early as 314, and this is the year in which Görres places it (*Kritische Untersuchungen ueber die licinianische Christenverfolgung*, p. 8). But if Görres' date (319 A.D.) for the commencement of the persecution be accepted (and though he can hardly be said to have proved it, he has urged some strong grounds in support of it), then the address may have been delivered at almost any time between 315 and 319, for, as Görres himself shows, Licinius and Constantine were outwardly at peace during the greater part of that time (*ib*. p. 14, sq.). There is nothing in the speech itself which prevents this later date, nor is it intrinsically improbable that the great basilica reached completion only in 315 or later. In fact, it must be admitted that Eusebius may have become bishop at any time between about 311 and 318.

The persecution of Licinius, which continued until his defeat by Constantine, in 323, was but local, and seems never to have been very severe. Indeed, it did not bear the character of a bloody persecution, though a few bishops appear to have met their death on one ground or another. Palestine and Egypt seem not to have suffered to any great extent (see Görres, *ib*. p. 32 sq.).

§4. *The Outbreak of the Arian Controversy. The Attitude of Eusebius.*

About the year 318, while Alexander was bishop of Alexandria, the Arian controversy broke out in that city, and the whole Eastern Church was soon involved in the strife. We cannot enter here into a discussion of Arius' views; but in order to understand the rapidity with which the Arian party grew, and the strong hold which it possessed from the very start in Syria and Asia Minor, we must remember that Arius was not himself the author of that system which we know as Arianism, but that he learned the essentials of it from his instructor Lucian. The latter was one of the most learned men of his age in the Oriental Church, and founded an exegetico-theological school in Antioch, which for a number of years stood outside of the communion of the orthodox Church in that city, but shortly before the martyrdom of Lucian himself (which took place in 311 or 312) made its peace with the Church, and was recognized by it. He was held in the highest reverence by his disciples, and exerted a great influence over them even after his death. Among them were such men as Arius, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Asterius, and others who were afterward known as staunch Arianists. According to Harnack the chief points in the system of Lucian and his disciples were the creation of the Son, the denial of his co-eternity with the Father, and his immutability acquired by persistent progress and steadfastness. His doctrine, which differed from that of Paul of Samosata chiefly in the fact that it was not a man but a created heavenly being who became "Lord," was evidently the result of a combination of the teaching of Paul and of Origen. It will be seen that we have here, at least in germ, all the essential elements of Arianism proper; the creation of the Son out of nothing, and consequently the conclusion that there was a time when he was not; the distinction of his essence from that of the Father, but at the same time the emphasis upon the fact that he "was not created as the other creatures," and is therefore to be sharply distinguished from them. There was little for Arius to do but to combine the elements given by Lucian in a more complete and well-ordered system, and then to bring that system forward clearly and publicly, and endeavor to make it the faith of the Church at large. His Christology was essentially opposed to the Alexandrian, and it was natural that he should soon come into conflict with that church, of which he was a presbyter (upon Lucian's teaching and its relation to

Arianism, see Harnack's *Dogmengeschichte*, II. p. 183 sq.).

Socrates (*H. E.* I. 5 sq.), Sozomen (*H. E.* I. 15) and Theodoret (*H. E.* I. 2 sq.), all of whom give accounts of the rise of Arianism, differ as to the immediate occasion of the controversy, but agree that Arius was excommunicated by a council convened at Alexandria, and that both he and the bishop Alexander sent letters to other churches, the latter defending his own course, the former complaining of his harsh treatment, and endeavoring to secure adherents to his doctrine. Eusebius of Nicomedia at once became his firm supporter, and was one of the leading figures on the Arian side throughout the entire controversy. His influential position as bishop of Nicomedia, the imperial residence, and later of Constantinople, was of great advantage to the Arian cause, especially toward the close of Constantine's reign. From a letter addressed by this Eusebius to Paulinus of Tyre (Theodoret, *H. E.* I. 6) we learn that Eusebius of Cæsarea was quite zealous in behalf of the Arian cause. The exact date of the letter we do not know, but it must have been written at an early stage of the controversy. Arius himself, in an epistle addressed to Eusebius of Nicomedia (Theodoret, *H. E.* I. 5), claims Eusebius of Cæsarea among others as accepting at least one of his fundamental doctrines ("And since Eusebius, your brother in Cæsarea, and Theodotus, and Paulinus, and Athanasius, and Gregory, and Ætius, and all the bishops of the East say that God existed before the Son, they have been condemned," etc.). More than this, Sozomen (*H. E.* I. 15) informs us that Eusebius of Cæsarea and two other bishops, having been appealed to by Arius for "permission for himself and his adherents, as he had already attained the rank of presbyter, to form the people who were with them into a church," concurred with others "who were assembled in Palestine," in granting the petition of Arius, and permitting him to assemble the people as before; but they "enjoined submission to Alexander, and commanded Arius to strive incessantly to be restored to peace and communion with him." The addition of the last sentence is noticeable, as showing that they did not care to support a presbyter in open and persistent rebellion against his bishop. A fragment of a letter written by our Eusebius to Alexander is still extant, and is preserved in the proceedings of the Second Council of Nicæa, Act. VI. Tom. V. (*Labbei et Cossartii Conc.* VII. col. 497). In this epistle Eusebius strongly remonstrates with Alexander for having misrepresented

the views of Arius. Still further, in his epistle to Alexander of Constantinople, Alexander of Alexandria (Theodoret, *H. E.* I. 4) complains of three Syrian bishops "who side with them [*i.e.* the Arians] and excite them to plunge deeper and deeper into iniquity." The reference here is commonly supposed to be to Eusebius of Cæsarea, and his two friends Paulinus of Tyre and Theodotus of Laodicea, who are known to have shown favor to Arius. It is probable, though not certain, that our Eusebius is one of the persons meant. Finally, many of the Fathers (above all Jerome and Photius), and in addition to them the Second Council of Nicæa, directly accuse Eusebius of holding the Arian heresy, as may be seen by examining the testimonies quoted below on p. 67 sq. In agreement with these early Fathers, many modern historians have attacked Eusebius with great severity, and have endeavored to show that the opinion that he was an Arian is supported by his own writings. Among those who have judged him most harshly are Baronius (*ad ann.* 340, c. 38 sq.), Petavius (*Dogm. Theol. de Trin*. I. c. 11 sq.), Scaliger (*In Elencho Trihæresii*, c. 27, and *De emendatione temporum*, Bk. VI. c. 1), Mosheim (*Ecclesiastical History*, Murdock's translation, I. p. 287 sq.), Montfaucon (*Prælim. in Comment. ad Psalm*. c. VI.), and Tillemont (*H. E.* VII. p. 67 sq. 2d ed.).

On the other hand, as may be seen from the testimonies in Eusebius' favor, quoted below on p. 57 sq., many of the Fathers, who were themselves orthodox, looked upon Eusebius as likewise sound on the subject of the Trinity. He has been defended in modern times against the charge of Arianism by a great many prominent scholars; among others by Valesius in his *Life of Eusebius*, by Bull (*Def. Fid. Nic*. II. 9. 20, III. 9. 3, 11), Cave (*Lives of the Fathers*, II. p. 135 sq.), Fabricius (*Bibl. Græc*. VI. p. 32 sq.), Dupin (*Bibl. Eccles*. II. p. 7 sq.), and most fully and carefully by Lee in his prolegomena to his edition of Eusebius' *Theophania*, p. xxiv. sq. Lightfoot also defends him against the charge of heresy, as do a great many other writers whom it is not necessary to mention here. Confronted with such diversity of opinion, both ancient and modern, what are we to conclude? It is useless to endeavor, as Lee does, to clear Eusebius of all sympathy with and leaning toward Arianism. It is impossible to explain such widespread and continued condemnation of him by acknowledging only that there are many expressions in his works which are in themselves perfectly orthodox but capable of being wrested in such a way as to produce a suspicion of possible

Arianistic tendencies, for there are such expressions in the works of multitudes of ancient writers whose orthodoxy has never been questioned. Nor can the widespread belief that he was an Arian be explained by admitting that he was for a time the personal friend of Arius, but denying that he accepted, or in any way sympathized with his views (cf. Newman's *Arians*, p. 262). There are in fact certain fragments of epistles extant, which are, to say the least, decidedly Arianistic in their modes of expression, and these must be reckoned with in forming an opinion of Eusebius' views; for there is no reason to deny, as Lee does, that they are from Eusebius' own hand. On the other hand, to maintain, with some of the Fathers and many of the moderns, that Eusebius was and continued through life a genuine Arian, will not do in the face of the facts that contemporary and later Fathers were divided as to his orthodoxy, that he was honored highly by the Church of subsequent centuries, except at certain periods, and was even canonized (see Lightfoot's article, p. 348), that he solemnly signed the Nicene Creed, which contained an express condemnation of the distinctive doctrines of Arius, and finally that at least in his later works he is thoroughly orthodox in his expressions, and is explicit in his rejection of the two main theses of the Arians—that there *was a time when the Son of God was not*, and that he was *produced out of nothing*. It is impossible to enter here into a detailed discussion of such passages in Eusebius' works as bear upon the subject under dispute. Lee has considered many of them at great length, and the reader may be referred to him for further information.

A careful examination of them will, I believe, serve to convince the candid student that there is a distinction to be drawn between those works written before the rise of Arius, those written between that time and the Council of Nicæa, and those written after the latter. It has been very common to draw a distinction between those works written before and those written after the Council, but no one, so far as I know, has distinguished those productions of Eusebius' pen which appeared between 318 and 325, and which were caused by the controversy itself, from all his other writings. And yet such a distinction seems to furnish the key to the problem. Eusebius' opponents have drawn their strongest arguments from the epistles which Eusebius wrote to Alexander and to Euphration; his defenders have drawn their arguments chiefly from the works which he produced subsequent to the year 325; while the exact bearing of the

expressions used in his works produced before the controversy broke out has always been a matter of sharp dispute. Lee has abundantly shown his *Contra Marcel.*, his *De Eccl. Theol.*, his *Thephania* (which was written after the Council of Nicæa, and not, as Lee supposes, before it), and other later works, to be thoroughly orthodox and to contain nothing which a trinitarian might not have written. In his *Hist. Eccl., Præparatio Evang., Demonstratio Evang.*, and other earlier works, although we find some expressions employed which it would not have been possible for an orthodox trinitarian to use after the Council of Nicæa, at least without careful limitation to guard against misapprehension, there is nothing even in these works which requires us to believe that he accepted the doctrines of Arius' predecessor, Lucian of Antioch; that is, there is nothing distinctly and positively Arianistic about them, although there are occasional expressions which might lead the reader to expect that the writer would become an Arian if he ever learned of Arius' doctrines. But if there is seen to be a lack of emphasis upon the divinity of the Son, or rather a lack of clearness in the conception of the nature of that divinity, it must be remembered that there was at this time no especial reason for emphasizing and defining it, but there was on the contrary very good reason for laying particular stress upon the subordination of the Son over against Sabellianism, which was so widely prevalent during the third century, and which was exerting an influence even over many orthodox theologians who did not consciously accept Sabellianistic tenets. That Eusebius was a decided subordinationist must be plain to every one that reads his works with care, especially his earlier ones. It would be surprising if he had not been, for he was born at a time when Sabellianism (monarchianism) was felt to be the greatest danger to which orthodox Christology was exposed, and he was trained under the influence of the followers of Origen, who had made it one of his chief aims to emphasize the subordination of the Son over against that very monarchianism[1]. The same subordinationism may

[1] It is interesting to notice that the creed of the Cæsarean church which Eusebius presented at the Council of Nice contains a clause which certainly looks as if it had been composed in opposition to the familiar formula of the Sabellians: "The same one is the Father, the same one the Son, the same one the Holy Spirit" See Epiphan. *Hær.* LXII. 1; and compare the statement made in the same section, that the Sabellians taught that God acts in three forms: in the form of the Father, as creator and lawgiver; in the form of the Son, as redeemer; and in the form of the Spirit, as life-giver, etc.). The clause of the Cæsarean creed referred to runs as follows: "That the Father is truly

be clearly seen in the writings of Dionysius of Alexandria and of Gregory Thaumaturgus, two of Origen's greatest disciples. It must not be forgotten that at the beginning of the fourth century the problem of how to preserve the Godhood of Christ and at the same time his subordination to the Father (in opposition to the monarchianists) had not been solved. Eusebius in his earlier writings shows that he holds both (he cannot be convicted of denying Christ's divinity), but that he is as far from a solution of the problem, and is just as uncertain in regard to the exact relation of Father and Son, as Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen, Dionysius, and Gregory Thaumaturgus were; is just as inconsistent in his modes of expression as they, and yet no more so (see Harnack's *Dogmengeschichte*, I. pp. 628 sq. and 634 sq., for an exposition of the opinions of these other Fathers on the subject). Eusebius, with the same immature and undeveloped views which were held all through the third century, wrote those earlier works which have given rise to so much dispute between those who accuse him of Arianism and those who defend him against the charge. When he wrote them he was neither Arian nor Athanasian, and for that reason passages may be found in them which if written after the Council of Nicæa might prove him an Arian, and other passages which might as truly prove him an Athanasian, just as in the writings of Origen were found by both parties passages to support their views, and in Gregory Thaumaturgus passages apparently teaching Arianism, and others teaching its opposite, Sabellianism (see Harnack, *ib*. p. 646).

Let us suppose now that Eusebius, holding fast to the divinity of Christ, and yet convinced just as firmly of his subordination to the Father, becomes acquainted through Arius, or other like-minded disciples of Lucian of Antioch, with a doctrine which seems to preserve the Godhood, while at the same time emphasizing strongly the subordination of the Son, and which formulates the relation of Father and Son in a clear and rational manner. That he should accept such a doctrine eagerly is just what we should expect, and just what we find him doing. In his epistles to

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Father, the Son truly Son, and the Holy Spirit truly Holy Spirit". It is significant that in the revised creed adopted by the Council these words are omitted, evidently because the occasion for them no longer existed, since not Sabellianism but Arianism was the heresy combated; and because, more than that, the use of them would but weaken the emphasis which the Council wished to put upon the essential divinity of all three persons.

Alexander and Euphration, he shows himself an Arian, and Arius and his followers were quite right in claiming him as a supporter. There is that in the epistles which is to be found nowhere in his previous writings, and which distinctly separates him from the orthodox party. How then are we to explain the fact that a few years later he signed the Nicene creed and anathematized the doctrines of Arius? Before we can understand his conduct, it is necessary to examine carefully the two epistles in question. Such an examination will show us that what Eusebius is defending in them is not genuine Arianism. He evidently thinks that it is, evidently supposes that he and Arius are in complete agreement upon the subjects under discussion; but he is mistaken. The extant fragments of the two epistles are given below on p. 70. It will be seen that Eusebius in them defends the Arian doctrine that there was a time when the Son of God was not. It will be seen also that he finds fault with Alexander for representing the Arians as teaching that the "Son of God was made out of nothing, like all creatures," and contends that Arius teaches that the Son of God was *begotten*, and that he was not produced like all creatures. We know that the Arians very commonly applied the word "begotten" to Christ, using it in such cases as synonymous with "created," and thus not implying, as the Athanasians did when they used the word, that he was of one substance with the Father (compare, for instance, the explanation of the meaning of the term given by Eusebius of Nicomedia in his epistle to Paulinus; Theod. *H. E.* I. 6). It is evident that the use of this word had deceived our Eusebius, and that he was led by it to think that they taught that the Son was of the Father in a peculiar sense, and did in reality partake in some way of essential Godhood. And indeed it is not at all surprising that the words of Arius, in his epistle to Alexander of Alexandria (see Athan. *Ep. de conc. Arim. et Seleuc.*, chap. II. §3; Oxford edition of Athanasius' *Tracts against Arianism*, p. 97), quoted by Eusebius in his epistle to the same Alexander, should give Eusebius that impression. The words are as follows: "The God of the law, and of the prophets, and of the New Testament before eternal ages begat an only-begotten Son, through whom also He made the ages and the universe. And He begat him not in appearance, but in truth, and subjected him to his own will, unchangeable and immutable, a perfect creature of God, but not as one of the creatures." Arius' use here of the word "begat," and his qualification of the word "creature" by the adjective "perfect," and

by the statement that he was "not as one of the creatures" naturally tended to make Eusebius think that Arius acknowledged a real divinity of the Son, and that appeared to him to be all that was necessary. Meanwhile Alexander in his epistle to Alexander of Constantinople (Theod. *H. E.* I. 4) had, as Eusebius says, misstated Arius' opinion, or at least had attributed to him the belief that Christ was "made like all other men that have ever been born," whereas Arius expressly disclaims such a belief. Alexander undoubtedly thought that that was the legitimate result to which the other views of Arius must lead; but Eusebius did not think so, and felt himself called upon to remonstrate with Alexander for what seemed to him the latter's unfairness in the matter.

When we examine the Cæsarean creed which Eusebius presented to the Council as a fair statement of his belief, we find nothing in it inconsistent with the acceptance of the kind of Arianism which he defends in his epistle to Alexander, and which he evidently supposed to be practically the Arianism of Arius himself. In his epistle to Euphration, however, Eusebius seems at first glance to go further and to give up the real divinity of the Son. His words are, "Since the Son is himself God, but not true God." But we have no right to interpret these words, torn as they are from the context which might make their meaning perfectly plain, without due regard to Eusebius' belief expressed elsewhere in this epistle, and in his epistle to Alexander which was evidently written about the same time. In the epistle to Alexander he clearly reveals a belief in the real divinity of the Son, while in the other fragment of his epistle to Euphration he dwells upon the subordination of the Son and approves the Arian opinion, which he had defended also in the other epistle, that the "Father was before the Son." The expression, "not true God" (a very common Arian expression; see Athan. *Orat. c. Arian*. I. 6) seems therefore to have been used by Eusebius to express a belief, not that the Son did not possess real divinity (as the genuine Arians used it), but that he was not equal to the Father, who, to Eusebius' thought, was "true God." He indeed expressly calls the Son θεός, which shows—when the sense in which he elsewhere uses the word is considered—that he certainly did believe him to partake of Godhood, though, in some mysterious way, in a smaller degree, or in a less complete manner than the Father. That Eusebius misunderstood Arius, and did not perceive that he actually denied all real deity to the Son, was due

doubtless in part to his lack of theological insight (Eusebius was never a great theologian), in part to his habitual dread of Sabellianism (of which Arius had accused Alexander, and toward which Eusebius evidently thought that the latter was tending), which led him to look with great favor upon the pronounced subordinationism of Arius, and thus to overlook the dangerous extreme to which Arius carried that subordinationism.

We are now, the writer hopes, prepared to admit that Eusebius, after the breaking out of the Arian controversy, became an Arian, as he understood Arianism, and supported that party with considerable vigor; and that not as a result of mere personal friendship, but of theological conviction. At the same time, he was then, as always, a peace-loving man, and while lending Arius his approval and support, he united with other Palestinian bishops in enjoining upon him submission to his bishop (Sozomen, *H. E.* I. 15). As an Arian, then, and yet possessed with the desire of securing, if it were possible, peace and harmony between the two factions, Eusebius appeared at the Council of Nicæa, and there signed a creed containing Athanasian doctrine and anathematizing the chief tenets of Arius. How are we to explain his conduct? We shall, perhaps, do best to let him explain his own conduct. In his letter to the church of Cæsarea (preserved by Socrates, *H. E.* I. 8, as well as by other authors), he writes as follows:

"What was transacted concerning ecclesiastical faith at the Great Council assembled at Nicæa you have probably learned, Beloved, from other sources, rumour being wont to precede the accurate account of what is doing. But lest in such reports the circumstances of the case have been misrepresented, we have been obliged to transmit to you, first, the formula of faith presented by ourselves; and next, the second, which the Fathers put forth with some additions to our words. Our own paper, then, which was read in the presence of our most pious Emperor, and declared to be good and unexceptionable, ran thus:

"'As we have received from the Bishops who preceded us, and in our first catechisings, and when we received the Holy Laver, and as we have learned from the divine Scriptures, and as we believed and taught in the presbytery, and in the Episcopate itself, so believing also at the time present, we report to you our faith, and it is this:

"'We believe in One God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in One Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God from God, Light from Light, Life from Life, Son Only-begotten, first-born of every creature, before all the ages, begotten from the Father, by whom also all things were made; who for our salvation was made flesh, and lived among men, and suffered, and rose again the third day, and ascended to the Father, and will come again in glory to judge quick and dead. And we believe also in One Holy Ghost; believing each of These to be and to exist, the Father truly Father, and the Son truly Son, and the Holy Ghost truly Holy Ghost, as also our Lord, sending forth His disciples for the preaching, said, *Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. Concerning whom we confidently affirm that so we hold, and so we think, and so we have held aforetime, and we maintain this faith unto the death, anathematizing every godless heresy. That this we have ever thought from our heart and soul, from the time we recollect ourselves, and now think and say in truth, before God Almighty and our Lord Jesus Christ do we witness, being able by proofs to show and to convince you, that, even in times past, such has been our belief and preaching.'

"On this faith being publicly put forth by us, no room for contradiction appeared; but our most pious Emperor, before any one else, testified that it comprised most orthodox statements. He confessed, moreover, that such were his own sentiments; and he advised all present to agree to it, and to subscribe its articles and to assent to them, with the insertion of the single word, 'One in substance' (ὁμοούσιος), which, moreover, he interpreted as not in the sense of the affections of bodies, nor as if the Son subsisted from the Father, in the way of division, or any severance; for that the immaterial and intellectual and incorporeal nature could not be the subject of any corporeal affection, but that it became us to conceive of such things in a divine and ineffable manner. And such were the theological remarks of our most wise and most religious Emperor; but they, with a view to the addition of 'One in substance,' drew up the following formula:

"'We believe in One God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible:— And in One Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, Only-begotten, that is, from the Substance of the Father; God

from God, Light from Light, very God from very God, begotten, not made, One in substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, both things in heaven and things in earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh, was made man, suffered, and rose again the third day, ascended into heaven, and cometh to judge quick and dead.

"'And in the Holy Ghost. But those who say, "Once He was not," and "Before His generation He was not," and "He came to be from nothing," or those who pretend that the Son of God is "Of other subsistence or substance," or "created," or "alterable," or "mutable," the Catholic Church anathematizes.'

"On their dictating this formula, we did not let it pass without inquiry in what sense they introduced 'of the substance of the Father,' and 'one in substance with the Father.' Accordingly, questions and explanations took place, and the meaning of the words underwent the scrutiny of reason. And they professed that the phrase 'of the substance' was indicative of the Son's being indeed from the Father, yet without being as if a part of Him. And with this understanding we thought good to assent to the sense of such religious doctrine, teaching, as it did, that the Son was from the Father, not, however, a part of His substance. On this account we assented to the sense ourselves, without declining even the term 'One in substance,' peace being the object which we set before us, and steadfastness in the orthodox view. In the same way we also admitted 'begotten, not made'; since the Council alleged that 'made' was an appellative common to the other creatures which came to be through the Son, to whom the Son had no likeness. Wherefore, said they, He was not a work resembling the things which through Him came to be, but was of a substance which is too high for the level of any work, and which the Divine oracles teach to have been generated from the Father, the mode of generation being inscrutable and incalculable to every generated nature. And so, too, on examination there are grounds for saying that the Son is 'one in substance' with the Father; not in the way of bodies, nor like mortal beings, for He is not such by division of substance, or by severance; no, nor by any affection, or alteration, or changing of the Father's substance and power (since from all such the ingenerate nature of the Father is alien), but because 'one in substance with the Father' suggests that the Son of God bears no resemblance to the generated creatures, but that to His Father alone who begat Him is He in

every way assimilated, and that He is not of any other subsistence and substance, but from the Father.

"To which term also, thus interpreted, it appeared well to assent; since we were aware that, even among the ancients, some learned and illustrious Bishops and writers have used the term 'one in substance' in their theological teaching concerning the Father and Son. So much, then, be said concerning the faith which was published; to which all of us assented, not without inquiry, but according to the specified senses, mentioned before the most religious Emperor himself, and justified by the foregoing considerations. And as to the anathematism published by them at the end of the Faith, it did not pain us, because it forbade to use words not in Scripture, from which almost all the confusion and disorder of the Church have come. Since, then, no divinely inspired Scripture has used the phrases, 'out of nothing' and 'once He was not,' and the rest which follow, there appeared no ground for using or teaching them; to which also we assented as a good decision, since it had not been our custom hitherto to use these terms. Moreover, to anathematize 'Before His generation He was not' did not seem preposterous, in that it is confessed by all that the Son of God was before the generation according to the flesh. Nay, our most religious Emperor did at the time prove, in a speech, that He was in being even according to His divine generation which is before all ages, since even before he was generated in energy, He was in virtue with the Father ingenerately, the Father being always Father, as King always and Saviour always, having all things in virtue, and being always in the same respects and in the same way. This we have been forced to transmit to you, Beloved, as making clear to you the deliberation of our inquiry and assent, and how reasonably we resisted even to the last minute, as long as we were offended at statements which differed from our own, but received without contention what no longer pained us, as soon as, on a candid examination of the sense of the words, they appeared to us to coincide with what we ourselves have professed in the faith which we have already published."

It will be seen that while the expressions "of the substance of the Father," "begotten not made," and "One in substance," or "consubstantial with the Father," are all explicitly anti-Arianistic, yet none of them contradicts the doctrines held by Eusebius before the Council, so far as we can learn them from his epistles to Alexander and Euphration and from

the Cæsarean creed. His own explanation of those expressions, which it is to be observed was the explanation given by the Council itself, and which therefore he was fully warranted in accepting—even though it may not have been so rigid as to satisfy an Athanasius—shows us how this is. He had believed before that the Son partook of the Godhood in very truth, that He was "begotten," and therefore "not made," if "made" implied something different from "begotten," as the Nicene Fathers held that it did; and he had believed before that the "Son of God has no resemblance to created' things, but is in every respect like the Father only who begat him, and that He is of no other substance or essence than the Father," and therefore if that was what the word "Consubstantial" (ὁμοούσιος) meant he could not do otherwise than accept that too.

It is clear that the dread of Sabellianism was still before the eyes of Eusebius, and was the cause of his hesitation in assenting to the various changes, especially to the use of the word ὁμοούσιος, which had been a Sabellian word and had been rejected on that account by the Synod of Antioch, at which Paul of Samosata had been condemned some sixty years before.

It still remains to explain Eusebius' sanction of the anathemas attached to the creed which expressly condemn at least one of the beliefs which he had himself formerly held, viz.: that the "Father was before the Son," or as he puts it elsewhere, that "He who is begat him who was not." The knot might of course be simply cut by supposing an act of hypocrisy on his part, but the writer is convinced that such a conclusion does violence to all that we know of Eusebius and of his subsequent treatment of the questions involved in this discussion. It is quite possible to suppose that a real change of opinion on his part took place during the sessions of the Council. Indeed when we realize how imperfect and incorrect a conception of Arianism he had before the Council began, and how clearly its true bearing was there brought out by its enemies, we can see that he could not do otherwise than change; that he must have become either an out-and-out Arian, or an opponent of Arianism as he did. When he learned, and learned for the first time, that Arianism meant the denial of all essential divinity to Christ, and when he saw that it involved the ascription of mutability and of other finite attributes to him, he must either change entirely his views on those points or he must leave the Arian party. To him who with all his subordinationism

had laid in all his writings so much stress on the divinity of the Word (even though he had not realized exactly what that divinity involved) it would have been a revolution in his Christian life and faith to have admitted what he now learned that Arianism involved. Sabellianism had been his dread, but now this new fear, which had aroused so large a portion of the Church, seized him too, and he felt that stand must be made against this too great separation of Father and Son, which was leading to dangerous results. Under the pressure of this fear it is not surprising that he should become convinced that the Arian formula—"there was a time when the Son was not"—involved serious consequences, and that Alexander and his followers should have succeeded in pointing out to him its untruth, because it led necessarily to a false conclusion. It is not surprising, moreover, that they should have succeeded in explaining to him at least partially their belief, which, as his epistle to Alexander shows, had before been absolutely incomprehensible, that the Son was generated from all eternity, and that therefore the Father did not exist before him in a temporal sense.

He says toward the close of his epistle to the Cæsarean church that he had not been accustomed to use such expressions as "There was a time when he was not," "He came to be from nothing," etc. And there is no reason to doubt that he speaks the truth. Even in his epistles to Alexander and Euphration he does not use those phrases (though he does defend the doctrine taught by the first of them), nor does Arius himself, in the epistle to Alexander upon which Eusebius apparently based his knowledge of the system, use those expressions, although he too teaches the same doctrine. The fact is that in that epistle Arius studiously avoids such favorite Arian phrases as might emphasize the differences between himself and Alexander, and Eusebius seems to have avoided them for the same reason. We conclude then that Eusebius was not an Arian (nor an adherent of Lucian) before 318, that soon after that date he became an Arian in the sense in which he understood Arianism, but that during the Council of Nicæa he ceased to be one in any sense. His writings in later years confirm the course of doctrinal development which we have supposed went on in his mind. He never again defends Arian doctrines in his works, and yet he never becomes an Athanasian in his emphasis upon the ὁμοούσιον. In fact he represents a mild orthodoxy, which is always orthodox—when measured by the Nicene creed as interpreted by the Nicene Council—and yet is always

mild. Moreover, he never acquired an affection for the word ὁμοούσιος, which to his mind was bound up with too many evil associations ever to have a pleasant sound to him. He therefore studiously avoided it in his own writings, although clearly showing that he believed fully in what the Nicene Council had explained it to mean. It must be remembered that during many years of his later life he was engaged in controversy with Marcellus, a thorough-going Sabellian, who had been at the time of the Council one of the strongest of Athanasius' colleagues. In his contest with him it was again anti-Sabellianistic polemics which absorbed him and increased his distaste for ὁμοούσιον and minimized his emphasis upon the distinctively anti-Arianistic doctrines formulated at Nicæa. For any except the very wisest minds it was a matter of enormous difficulty to steer between the two extremes in those times of strife; and while combating Sabellianism not to fall into Arianism, and while combating the latter not to be engulfed in the former. That Eusebius under the constant pressure of the one fell into the other at one time, and was in occasional danger of falling into it again in later years, can hardly be cited as an evidence either of wrong heart or of weak head. An Athanasius he was not, but neither was he an unsteady weather-cock, or an hypocritical time-server.

§5. *The Council of Nicæa*.

At the Council of Nicæa, which met pursuant to an imperial summons in the year 325 A.D., Eusebius played a very prominent part. A description of the opening scenes of the Council is given in his *Vita Constantini*, III. 10 sq. After the Emperor had entered in pomp and had taken his seat, a bishop who sat next to him upon his right arose and delivered in his honor the opening oration, to which the Emperor replied in a brief Latin address. There can be no doubt that this bishop was our Eusebius. Sozomen (*H. E.* I. 19) states it directly; and Eusebius, although he does not name the speaker, yet refers to him, as he had referred to the orator at the dedication of Paulinus' church at Tyre, in such a way as to make it clear that it was himself; and moreover in his *Vita Constantini*, I. 1, he mentions the fact that he had in the midst of an assembly of the servants of God addressed an oration to the Emperor on the occasion of the latter's *vicennalia*, i.e. in 325 A.D. On the other hand, however, Theodoret (*H. E.*

I. 7) states that this opening oration was delivered by Eustathius, bishop of Antioch; while Theodore of Mopsuestia and Philostorgius (according to Nicetas Choniates, *Thes. de orthod. fid.* V. 7) assign it to Alexander of Alexandria. As Lightfoot suggests, it is possible to explain the discrepancy in the reports by supposing that Eustathius and Alexander, the two great patriarchs, first addressed a few words to the Emperor and that then Eusebius delivered the regular oration. This supposition is not at all unlikely, for it would be quite proper for the two highest ecclesiastics present to welcome the Emperor formally in behalf of the assembled prelates, before the regular oration was delivered by Eusebius. At the same time, the supposition that one or the other of the two great patriarchs must have delivered the opening address was such a natural one that it may have been adopted by Theodoret and the other writers referred to without any historical basis. It is in any case certain that the regular oration was delivered by Eusebius himself (see the convincing arguments adduced by Stroth, p. xxvii. sq.). This oration is no longer extant, but an idea of its character may be formed from the address delivered by Eusebius at the Emperor's *tricennalia* (which is still extant under the title *De laudibus Constantini*; see below, p. 43) and from the general tone of his Life of Constantine. It was avowedly a panegyric, and undoubtedly as fulsome as it was possible to make it, and his powers in that direction were by no means slight.

That Eusebius, instead of the bishop of some more prominent church, should have been selected to deliver the opening address, may have been in part owing to his recognized standing as the most learned man and the most famous writer in the Church, in part to the fact that he was not as pronounced a partisan as some of his distinguished brethren; for instance, Alexander of Alexandria, and Eusebius of Nicomedia; and finally in some measure to his intimate relations with the Emperor. How and when his intimacy with the latter grew up we do not know. As already remarked, he seems to have become personally acquainted with him many years before, when Constantine passed through Cæsarea in the train of Diocletian, and it may be that a mutual friendship, which was so marked in later years, began at that time. However that may be, Eusebius seems to have possessed special advantages of one kind or another, enabling him to come into personal contact with official circles, and once introduced to imperial

notice, his wide learning, sound common sense, genial temper and broad charity would insure him the friendship of the Emperor himself, or of any other worthy officer of state. We have no record of an intimacy between Constantine and Eusebius before the Council of Nicæa, but many clear intimations of it after that time. In fact, it is evident that during the last decade at least of the Emperor's life, few, if any, bishops stood higher in his esteem or enjoyed a larger measure of his confidence. Compare for instance the records of their conversations (contained in the *Vita Constantini*, I. 28 and II. 9), of their correspondence (*ib*. II. 46, III. 61, IV. 35 and 36), and the words of Constantine himself (*ib*. III. 60). The marked attention paid by him to the speeches delivered by Eusebius in his presence (*ib*. IV. 33 and 46) is also to be noticed. Eusebius' intimacy with the imperial family is shown likewise in the tone of the letter which he wrote to Constantia, the sister of Constantine and wife of Licinius, in regard to a likeness of Christ which she had asked him to send her. The frankness and freedom with which he remonstrates with her for what he considers mistaken zeal on her part, reveal a degree of familiarity which could have come only from long and cordial relations between himself and his royal correspondent. Whatever other reasons therefore may have combined to indicate Eusebius as the most fitting person to deliver the oration in honor of the Emperor at the Council of Nicæa, there can be little doubt that Constantine's personal friendship for him had much to do with his selection. The action of the Council on the subject of Arianism, and Eusebius' conduct in the matter, have already been discussed. Of the bishops assembled at the Council, not far from three hundred in number (the reports of eye-witnesses vary from two hundred and fifty to three hundred and eighteen), all but two signed the Nicene creed as adopted by the Council. These two, both of them Egyptians, were banished with Arius to Illyria, while Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Theognis of Nicæa, who subscribed the creed itself but refused to assent to its anathemas, were also banished for a time, but soon yielded, and were restored to their churches.

Into the other purposes for which the Nicene Council was called—the settlement of the dispute respecting the time of observing Easter and the healing of the Meletian schism—it is not necessary to enter here. We have no record of the part which Eusebius took in these transactions. Lightfoot has abundantly shown (p. 313 sq.) that the common supposition that

Eusebius was the author of the paschal cycle of nineteen years is false, and that there is no reason to suppose that he had anything particular to do with the decision of the paschal question at this Council.

§6. *Continuance of the Arian Controversy. Eusebius' Relations to the Two Parties.*

The Council of Nicæa did not bring the Arian controversy to an end. The orthodox party was victorious, it is true, but the Arians were still determined, and could not give up their enmity against the opponents of Arius, and their hope that they might in the end turn the tables on their antagonists. Meanwhile, within a few years after the Council, a quarrel broke out between our Eusebius and Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, a resolute supporter of Nicene orthodoxy. According to Socrates (*H. E.* I. 23) and Sozomen (*H. E.* II. 18) Eustathius accused Eusebius of perverting the Nicene doctrines, while Eusebius denied the charge, and in turn taxed Eustathius with Sabellianism. The quarrel finally became so serious that it was deemed necessary to summon a Council for the investigation of Eustathius' orthodoxy and the settlement of the dispute. This Council met in Antioch in 330 A.D. (see Tillemont, VII. p. 651 sq., for a discussion of the date), and was made up chiefly of bishops of Arian or semi-Arian tendencies. This fact, however, brings no discredit upon Eusebius. The Council was held in another province, and he can have had nothing to do with its composition. In fact, convened, as it was, in Eustathius' own city, it must have been legally organized; and indeed Eustathius himself acknowledged its jurisdiction by appearing before it to answer the charges made against him. Theodoret's absurd account of the origin of the synod and of the accusations brought against Eustathius (*H. E.* I. 21) bears upon its face the stamp of falsehood, and is, as Hefele has shown (*Conciliengeschichte*, I. 451), hopelessly in error in its chronology. It is therefore to be rejected as quite worthless. The decision of the Council doubtless fairly represented the views of the majority of the bishops of that section, for we know that Arianism had a very strong hold there. To think of a packed Council and of illegal methods of procedure in procuring the verdict against Eustathius is both unnecessary and unwarrantable. The result of the Council was the deposition of Eustathius from his bishopric

and his banishment by the Emperor to Illyria, where he afterward died. There is a division of opinion among our sources in regard to the immediate successor of Eustathius. All of them agree that Eusebius was asked to become bishop of Antioch, but that he refused the honor, and that Euphronius was chosen in his stead. Socrates and Sozomen, however, inform us that the election of Eusebius took place immediately after the deposition of Eustathius, while Theodoret (*H. E.* I. 22) names Eulalius as Eustathius' immediate successor, and states that he lived but a short time, and that Eusebius was then asked to succeed him. Theodoret is supported by Jerome (*Chron.*, year of Abr. 2345) and by Philostorgius (*H. E.* III. 15), both of whom insert a bishop Eulalius between Eustathius and Euphronius. It is easier to suppose that Socrates and Sozomen may have omitted so unimportant a name at this point than that the other three witnesses inserted it without warrant. Socrates indeed implies in the same chapter that his knowledge of these affairs is limited, and it is not surprising that Eusebius' election, which caused a great stir, should have been connected in the mind of later writers immediately with Eustathius' deposition, and the intermediate steps forgotten. It seems probable, therefore, that immediately after the condemnation of Eustathius, Eulalius was appointed in his place, perhaps by the same Council, and that after his death, a few months later, Eusebius, who had meanwhile gone back to Cæsarea, was elected in due order by another Council of neighboring bishops summoned for the purpose, and that he was supported by a large party of citizens. It is noticeable that the letter written by the Emperor to the Council, which wished to transfer Eusebius to Antioch (see *Vita Const.* III. 62), mentions in its salutation the names of five bishops, but among them is only one (Theodotus) who is elsewhere named as present at the Council which deposed Eustathius, while Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Theognis of Nicæa, as well as others whom we know to have been on hand on that occasion, are not referred to by the Emperor. This fact certainly seems to point to a different council.

It is greatly to Eusebius' credit that he refused the call extended to him. Had he been governed simply by selfish ambition he would certainly have accepted it, for the patriarchate of Antioch stood at that time next to Alexandria in point of honor in the Eastern Church. The Emperor commended him very highly for his decision, in his epistles to the people

of Antioch and to the Council (*Vita Const*. III. 60, 62), and in that to Eusebius himself (*ib*. III. 61). He saw in it a desire on Eusebius' part to observe the ancient canon of the Church, which forbade the transfer of a bishop from one see to another. But that in itself can hardly have been sufficient to deter the latter from accepting the high honor offered him, for it was broken without scruple on all sides. It is more probable that he saw that the schism of the Antiochenes would be embittered by the induction into the bishopric of that church of Eustathius' chief opponent, and that he did not feel that he had a right so to divide the Church of God. Eusebius' general character, as known to us, justifies us in supposing that this high motive had much to do with his decision. We may suppose also that so difficult a place can have had no very great attractions for a man of his age and of his peace-loving disposition and scholarly tastes. In Cæsarea he had spent his life; there he had the great library of Pamphilus at his disposal, and leisure to pursue his literary work. In Antioch he would have found himself compelled to plunge into the midst of quarrels and seditions of all kinds, and would have been obliged to devote his entire attention to the performance of his official duties. His own tastes therefore must have conspired with his sense of duty to lead him to reject the proffered call and to remain in the somewhat humbler station which he already occupied.

Not long after the deposition of Eustathius, the Arians and their sympathizers began to work more energetically to accomplish the ruin of Athanasius, their greatest foe. He had become Alexander's successor as bishop of Alexandria in the year 326, and was the acknowledged head of the orthodox party. If he could be brought into discredit, there might be hopes of restoring Arius to his position in Alexandria, and of securing for Arianism a recognition, and finally a dominating influence in the church at large. To the overthrow of Athanasius therefore all good Arians bent their energies. They found ready accomplices in the schismatical Meletians of Egypt, who were bitter enemies of the orthodox church of Alexandria. It was useless to accuse Athanasius of heterodoxy; he was too widely known as the pillar of the orthodox faith. Charges must be framed of another sort, and of a sort to stir up the anger of the Emperor against him. The Arians therefore and the Meletians began to spread the most vile and at the same time absurd stories about Athanasius (see especially the latter's *Apol. c. Arian*. §59 sq.). These at last became so notorious that the Emperor

summoned Athanasius to appear and make his defense before a council of bishops to be held in Cæsarea (Sozomen, *H. E.* II. 25; Theodoret, *H. E.* I. 28). Athanasius, however, fearing that the Council would be composed wholly of his enemies, and that it would therefore be impossible to secure fair play, excused himself and remained away. But in the following year (see Sozomen, *H. E.* II. 25) he received from the Emperor a summons to appear before a council at Tyre. The summons was too peremptory to admit of a refusal, and Athanasius therefore attended, accompanied by many of his devoted adherents (see Sozomen, *ib.*; Theodoret, *H. E.* I. 30; Socrates, *H. E.* I. 28; Athanasius, *Apol. c. Arian.* §71 sq.; Eusebius, *Vita Const.* IV. 41 sq., and Epiphanius, *Hær.* LXVIII. 8). After a time, perceiving that he had no chance of receiving fair play, he suddenly withdrew from the Council and proceeded directly to Constantinople, in order to lay his case before the Emperor himself, and to induce the latter to allow him to meet his accusers in his presence, and plead his cause before him. There was nothing for the Synod to do after his flight but to sustain the charges brought against him, some of which he had not stayed to refute, and to pass condemnation upon him. Besides various immoral and sacrilegious deeds of which he was accused, his refusal to appear before the Council of Cæsarea the previous year was made an important item of the prosecution. It was during this Council that Potamo flung at Eusebius the taunt of cowardice, to which reference was made above, and which doubtless did much to confirm Eusebius' distrust of and hostility to the Athanasian party. Whether Eusebius of Cæsarea, as is commonly supposed, or Eusebius of Nicomedia, or some other bishop, presided at this Council we are not able to determine. The account of Epiphanius seems to imply that the former was presiding at the time that Potamo made his untimely accusation. Our sources are, most of them, silent on the matter, but according to Valesius, Eusebius of Nicomedia is named by some of them, but which they are I have not been able to discover. We learn from Socrates (*H. E.* I. 28), as well as from other sources, that this Synod of Tyre was held in the thirtieth year of Constantine's reign, that is, between July, 334, and July, 335. As the Council was closed only in time for the bishops to reach Jerusalem by July, 335, it is probable that it was convened in 335 rather than in 334. From Sozomen (*H. E.* II. 25) we learn also that the Synod of Cæsarea had been held the preceding year, therefore in 333 or

334 (the latter being the date commonly given by historians). While the Council of Tyre was still in session, the bishops were commanded by Constantine to proceed immediately to Jerusalem to take part in the approaching festival to be held there on the occasion of his *tricennalia*. The scene was one of great splendor. Bishops were present from all parts of the world, and the occasion was marked by the dedication of the new and magnificent basilica which Constantine had erected upon the site of Calvary (Theodoret, I. 31; Socrates, I. 28 and 33; Sozomen, II. 26; Eusebius, *Vita Const*. IV. 41 and 43). The bishops gathered in Jerusalem at this time held another synod before separating. In this they completed the work begun at Tyre, by re-admitting Arius and his adherents to the communion of the Church (see Socrates, I. 33, and Sozomen, II. 27). According to Sozomen the Emperor, having been induced to recall Arius from banishment in order to reconsider his case, was presented by the latter with a confession of faith, which was so worded as to convince Constantine of his orthodoxy. He therefore sent Arius and his companion Euzoius to the bishops assembled in Jerusalem with the request that they would examine the confession, and if they were satisfied with its orthodoxy would re-admit them to communion. The Council, which was composed largely of Arius' friends and sympathizers, was only too glad to accede to the Emperor's request.

Meanwhile Athanasius had induced Constantine, out of a sense of justice, to summon the bishops that had condemned him at Tyre to give an account of their proceedings before the Emperor himself at Constantinople. This unexpected, and, doubtless, not altogether welcome summons came while the bishops were at Jerusalem, and the majority of them at once returned home in alarm, while only a few answered the call and repaired to Constantinople. Among these were Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicæa, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, and other prominent Arians, and with them our Eusebius (Athanasius, *Apol. c. Arian*. §§86 and 87; Socrates, I. 33–35; Sozomen, II. 28). The accusers of Athanasius said nothing on this occasion in regard to his alleged immoralities, for which he had been condemned at Tyre, but made another equally trivial accusation against him, and the result was his banishment to Gaul. Whether Constantine banished him because he believed the charge brought against him, or because he wished to preserve him from the

machinations of his enemies (as asserted by his son Constantine, and apparently believed by Athanasius himself; see his *Apol. c. Arian*. §87), or because he thought that Athanasius' absence would allay the troubles in the Alexandrian church we do not know. The latter supposition seems most probable. In any case he was not recalled from banishment until after Constantine's death. Our Eusebius has been severely condemned by many historians for the part taken by him in the Eustathian controversy and especially in the war against Athanasius. In justice to him a word or two must be spoken in his defense. So far as his relations to Eustathius are concerned, it is to be noticed that the latter commenced the controversy by accusing Eusebius of heterodoxy. Eusebius himself did not begin the quarrel, and very likely had no desire to engage in any such doctrinal strife; but he was compelled to defend himself, and in doing so he could not do otherwise than accuse Eustathius of Sabellianism; for if the latter was not satisfied with Eusebius' orthodoxy, which Eusebius himself believed to be truly Nicene, then he must be leaning too far toward the other extreme; that is, toward Sabellianism. There is no reason to doubt that Eusebius was perfectly straightforward and honorable throughout the whole controversy, and at the Council of Antioch itself. That he was not actuated by unworthy motives, or by a desire for revenge, is evinced by his rejection of the proffered call to Antioch, the acceptance of which would have given him so good an opportunity to triumph over his fallen enemy. It must be admitted, in fact, that Eusebius comes out of this controversy without a stain of any kind upon his character. He honestly believed Eustathius to be a Sabellian, and he acted accordingly.

Eusebius has been blamed still more severely for his treatment of Athanasius. But again the facts must be looked at impartially. It is necessary always to remember that Sabellianism was in the beginning and remained throughout his life the heresy which he most dreaded, and which he had perhaps most reason to dread. He must, even at the Council of Nicæa, have suspected Athanasius, who laid so much stress upon the unity of essence on the part of Father and Son, of a leaning toward Sabellianistic principles; and this suspicion must have been increased when he discovered, as he believed, that Athanasius' most staunch supporter, Eustathius, was a genuine Sabellian. Moreover, on the other side, it is to be remembered that Eusebius of Nicomedia, and all the other leading

Arians, had signed the Nicene creed and had proclaimed themselves thoroughly in sympathy with its teaching. Our Eusebius, knowing the change that had taken place in his own mind upon the controverted points, may well have believed that their views had undergone even a greater change, and that they were perfectly honest in their protestations of orthodoxy. And finally, when Arius himself presented a confession of faith which led the Emperor, who had had a personal interview with him, to believe that he had altered his views and was in complete harmony with the Nicene faith, it is not surprising that our Eusebius, who was naturally unsuspicious, conciliatory and peace-loving, should think the same thing, and be glad to receive Arius back into communion, while at the same time remaining perfectly loyal to the orthodoxy of the Nicene creed which he had subscribed. Meanwhile his suspicions of the Arian party being in large measure allayed, and his distrust of the orthodoxy of Athanasius and of his adherents being increased by the course of events, it was only natural that he should lend more or less credence to the calumnies which were so industriously circulated against Athanasius. To charge him with dishonesty for being influenced by these reports, which seem to us so absurd and palpably calumnious, is quite unwarranted. Constantine, who was, if not a theologian, at least a clear-headed and sharp-sighted man, believed them, and why should Eusebius not have done the same? The incident which took place at the Council of Tyre in connection with Potamo and himself was important; for whatever doubts he may have had up to that time as to the truth of the accusations made against Athanasius and his adherents, Potamo's conduct convinced him that the charges of tyranny and high-handed dealing brought against the whole party were quite true. It could not be otherwise than that he should believe that the good of the Alexandrian church, and therefore of the Church at large, demanded the deposition of the seditious and tyrannous archbishop, who was at the same time quite probably Sabellianistic in his tendencies. It must in justice be noted that there is not the slightest reason to suppose that our Eusebius had anything to do with the dishonorable intrigues of the Arian party throughout this controversy. Athanasius, who cannot say enough in condemnation of the tactics of Eusebius of Nicomedia and his supporters, never mentions Eusebius of Cæsarea in a tone of bitterness. He refers to him occasionally as a member of the opposite party, but he has no

complaints to utter against him, as he has against the others. This is very significant, and should put an end to all suspicions of unworthy conduct on Eusebius' part. It is to be observed that the latter, though having good cause as he believed to condemn Athanasius and his adherents, never acted as a leader in the war against them. His name, if mentioned at all, occurs always toward the end of the list as one of the minor combatants, although his position and his learning would have entitled him to take the most prominent position in the whole affair, if he had cared to. He was but true to his general character in shrinking from such a controversy, and in taking part in it only in so far as his conscience compelled him to. We may suspect indeed that he would not have made one of the small party that repaired to Constantinople in response to the Emperor's imperious summons had it not been for the celebration of Constantine's *tricennalia*, which was taking place there at the time, and at which he delivered, on the special invitation of the Emperor and in his presence, one of his greatest orations. Certain it is, from the account which he gives in his *Vita Constantini*, that both in Constantinople and in Jerusalem the festival of the *tricennalia*, with its attendant ceremonies, interested him much more than did the condemnation of Athanasius.

§7. *Eusebius and Marcellus.*

It was during this visit to Constantinople that another synod was held, at which Eusebius was present, and the result of which was the condemnation and deposition of the bishop Marcellus of Ancyra (see Socrates, I. 36; Sozomen, II. 33; Eusebius, *Contra Marc.* II. 4). The attitude of our Eusebius toward Marcellus is again significant of his theological tendencies. Marcellus had written a book against Asterius, a prominent Arian, in which, in his zeal for the Nicene orthodoxy, he had laid himself open to the charge of Sabellianism. On this account he was deposed by the Constantinopolitan Synod, and our Eusebius was urged to write a work exposing his errors and defending the action of the Council. As a consequence he composed his two works against Marcellus which will be described later. That Eusebius, if not in the case of Athanasius and possibly not in that of Eustathius, had at least in the present case good ground for the belief that Marcellus was a Sabellian, or Sabellianistic in tendency, is

abundantly proved by the citations which he makes from Marcellus' own works; and, moreover, his judgment and that of the Synod was later confirmed even by Athanasius himself. Though not suspecting Marcellus for some time, Athanasius finally became convinced that he had deviated from the path of orthodoxy, and, as Newman has shown (in his introduction to Athanasius' fourth discourse against the Arians, *Oxford Library of the Fathers*, vol. 19, p. 503 sq.), directed that discourse against his errors and those of his followers.

The controversy with Marcellus seems to have been the last in which Eusebius was engaged, and it was opposition to the dreaded heresy of Sabellius which moved him here as in all the other cases. It is important to emphasize, however, what is often overlooked, that though Eusebius during these years was so continuously engaged in controversy with one or another of the members of the anti-Arian party, there is no evidence that he ever deviated from the doctrinal position which he took at the Council of Nicæa. After that date it was never Arianism which he consciously supported; it was never the Nicene orthodoxy which he opposed. He supported those members of the old Arian party who had signed the Nicene creed and protested that they accepted its teaching, against those members of the opposite party whom he believed to be drifting toward Sabellianism, or acting tyrannously and unjustly toward their opponents. The anti-Sabellianistic interest influenced him all the time, but his post-Nicene writings contain no evidence that he had fallen back into the Arianizing position which he had held before 325. They reveal, on the contrary, a fair type of orthodoxy, colored only by its decidedly anti-Sabellian emphasis.

§8. *The Death of Eusebius.*

In less than two years after the celebration of his *tricennalia*, on May 22, 337 A.D., the great Constantine breathed his last, in Nicomedia, his former Capital. Eusebius, already an old man, produced a lasting testimonial of his own unbounded affection and admiration for the first Christian emperor, in his *Life of Constantine*. Soon afterward he followed his imperial friend at the advanced age of nearly, if not quite, eighty years. The exact date of his death is unknown, but it can be fixed approximately. We know from Sozomen (*H. E.* III. 5) that in the summer of 341, when a

council was held at Antioch (on the date of the Council, which we are able to fix with great exactness, see Hefele, *Conciliengesch*. I. p. 502 sq.) Acacius, Eusebius' successor, was already bishop of Cæsarea. Socrates (*H. E*. II. 4) and Sozomen (*H. E*. III. 2) both mention the death of Eusebius and place it shortly before the death of Constantine the younger, which took place early in 340 (see Tillemont's *Hist. des Emp*. IV. p. 327 sq.), and after the intrigues had begun which resulted in Athanasius' second banishment. We are thus led to place Eusebius' death late in the year 339, or early in the year 340 (cf. Lightfoot's article, p. 318).

Chapter II - The Writings of Eusebius.

Eusebius was one of the most voluminous writers of antiquity, and his labors covered almost every field of theological learning. In the words of Lightfoot he was "historian, apologist, topographer, exegete, critic, preacher, dogmatic writer, in turn." It is as an historian that he is best known, but the importance of his historical writings should not cause us to overlook, as modern scholars have been prone to do, his invaluable productions in other departments. Lightfoot passes a very just judgment upon the importance of his works in the following words: "If the permanent utility of an author's labors may be taken as a test of literary excellence, Eusebius will hold a very high place indeed. The *Ecclesiastical History* is absolutely unique and indispensable. The *Chronicle* is the vast storehouse of information relating to the ancient monarchies of the world. The *Preparation* and *Demonstration* are the most important contributions to theology in their own province. Even the minor works, such as the *Martyrs of Palestine*, the *Life of Constantine,* the *Questions addressed to Stephanus and to Marinus*, and others, would leave an irreparable blank, if they were obliterated. And the same permanent value attaches also to his more technical treatises. The *Canons* and *Sections* have never yet been superseded for their particular purpose. The *Topography of Palestine* is the most important contribution to our knowledge in its own department. In short, no ancient ecclesiastical writer has laid posterity under heavier obligations."

If we look in Eusebius' works for evidences of brilliant genius we shall be disappointed. He did not possess a great creative mind like Origen's or Augustine's. His claim to greatness rests upon his vast erudition and his sterling sense. His powers of acquisition were remarkable and his diligence in study unwearied. He had at his command undoubtedly more acquired material than any man of his age, and he possessed that true literary and historical instinct which enabled him to select from his vast stores of knowledge those things which it was most worth his while to tell to the world. His writings therefore remain valuable while the works of many

others, perhaps no less richly equipped than himself for the mission of adding to the sum of human knowledge, are entirely forgotten. He thus had the ability to do more than acquire; he had the ability to impart to others the very best of that which he acquired, and to make it useful to them. There is not in his writings the brilliancy which we find in some others, there is not the same sparkle and freshness of new and suggestive thought, there is not the same impress of an overmastering individuality which transforms everything it touches. There is, however, a true and solid merit which marks his works almost without exception, and raises them above the commonplace. His exegesis is superior to that of most of his contemporaries, and his apologetics is marked by fairness of statement, breadth of treatment, and instinctive appreciation of the difference between the important and the unimportant points under discussion, which give to his apologetic works a permanent value. His wide acquaintance, too, with other systems than his own, and with the products of Pagan as well as Christian thought, enabled him to see things in their proper relations and to furnish a treatment of the great themes of Christianity adapted to the wants of those who had looked beyond the confines of a single school. At the same time it must be acknowledged that he was not always equal to the grand opportunities which his acquaintance with the works and lives of other men and other peoples opened before him. He does not always reveal the possession of that high quality of genius which is able to interpret the most various forces and to discover the higher principles of unity which alone make them intelligible; indeed, he often loses himself completely in a wilderness of thoughts and notions which have come to him from other men and other ages, and the result is dire confusion.

We shall be disappointed, too, if we seek in the works of Eusebius for evidences of a refined literary taste, or for any of the charms which attach to the writings of a great master of composition. His style is, as a rule, involved and obscure, often painfully rambling and incoherent. This quality is due in large part to the desultoriness of his thinking. He did not often enough clearly define and draw the boundaries of his subject before beginning to write upon it. He apparently did much of his thinking after he had taken pen in hand, and did not subject what he had thus produced to a sufficiently careful revision, if to any revision at all. Thoughts and

suggestions poured in upon him while he was writing; and he was not always able to resist the temptation to insert them as they came, often to the utter perversion of his train of thought, and to the ruin of the coherency and perspicuity of his style. It must be acknowledged, too, that his literary taste was, on the whole, decidedly vicious. Whenever a flight of eloquence is attempted by him, as it is altogether too often, his style becomes hopelessly turgid and pretentious. At such times his skill in mixing metaphors is something astounding (compare, for instance, *H. E.* II. 14). On the other hand, his works contain not a few passages of real beauty. This is especially true of his *Martyrs of Palestine*, where his enthusiastic admiration for and deep sympathy with the heroes of the faith cause him often to forget himself and to describe their sufferings in language of genuine fire or pathos. At times, too, when he has a sharply defined and absorbing aim in mind, and when the subject with which he is dealing does not seem to him to demand rhetorical adornment, he is simple and direct enough in his language, showing in such cases that his commonly defective style is not so much the consequence of an inadequate command of the Greek tongue as of desultory thinking and vicious literary taste.

But while we find much to criticise in Eusebius' writings, we ought not to fail to give him due credit for the conscientiousness and faithfulness with which he did his work. He wrote often, it is true, too rapidly for the good of his style, and he did not always revise his works as carefully as he should have done; but we seldom detect undue haste in the collection of materials or carelessness and negligence in the use of them. He seems to have felt constantly the responsibilities which rested upon him as a scholar and writer, and to have done his best to meet those responsibilities. It is impossible to avoid contrasting him in this respect with the most learned man of the ancient Latin Church, St. Jerome. The haste and carelessness with which the latter composed his *De Viris Illustribus*, and with which he translated and continued Eusebius' *Chronicle*, remain an everlasting disgrace to him. An examination of those and of some others of Jerome's works must tend to raise Eusebius greatly in our esteem. He was at least conscientious and honest in his work, and never allowed himself to palm off ignorance as knowledge, or to deceive his readers by sophistries, misstatements, and pure inventions. He aimed to put the reader into possession of the knowledge which he had himself acquired, but was always

conscientious enough to stop there, and not attempt to make fancy play the *rôle* of fact.

One other point, which was mentioned some pages back, and to which Lightfoot calls particular attention, should be referred to here, because of its bearing upon the character of Eusebius' writings. He was, above all things, an apologist; and the apologetic aim governed both the selection of his subjects and method of his treatment. He composed none of his works with a purely scientific aim. He thought always of the practical result to be attained, and his selection of material and his choice of method were governed by that. And yet we must recognize the fact that this aim was never narrowing in its effects. He took a broad view of apologetics, and in his lofty conception of the Christian religion he believed that every field of knowledge might be laid under tribute to it. He was bold enough to be confident that history, philosophy, and science all contribute to our understanding and appreciation of divine truth; and so history and philosophy and science were studied and handled by him freely and fearlessly. He did not feel the need of distorting truth of any kind because it might work injury to the religion which he professed. On the contrary, he had a sublime faith which led him to believe that all truth must have its place and its mission, and that the cause of Christianity will be benefited by its discovery and diffusion. As an apologist, therefore, all fields of knowledge had an interest for him; and he was saved that pettiness of mind and narrowness of outlook which are sometimes characteristic of those who write with a purely practical motive.

Chapter III - Eusebius' Church History.

§1. *Date of its Composition*

The work with which we are especially concerned at this time is the *Church History*, the original Greek of which is still extant in numerous mss. It consists of ten books, to which is added in most of the mss. the shorter form of the *Martyrs of Palestine* (see above, p. 29). The date of the work can be determined with considerable exactness. It closes with a eulogy of Constantine and his son Crispus; and since the latter was put to death by his father in the summer of 326, the *History* must have been completed before that time. On the other hand, in the same chapter Eusebius refers to the defeat of Licinius, which took place in the year 323 A.D. This gives a fixed *terminus a quo*. It is not quite certain from Eusebius' words whether the death of Licinius had already taken place at the time he wrote, but it seems probable that it had, and if so, the completion of the work must be put as late as the summer of 324. On the other hand, not the slightest reference is made to the Council of Nicæa, which met in the summer of 325; and still further the tenth book is dedicated to Paulinus, at one time bishop of Tyre and afterward bishop of Antioch (see Euseb. *Contra Marc*. I. 4, and Philost. *H. E*. III. 15), who was already dead in the summer of 325; for at the Nicene Council, Zeno appears as bishop of Tyre, and Eustathius as bishop of Antioch (see for further particulars Lightfoot, p. 322). We are thus led to place the completion of the *History* in the year 324, or, to give the widest possible limits, between the latter part of 323 and the early part of 325 A.D.

But the question has been raised whether the earlier books may not have been composed some years before this. Lightfoot (following Westcott) supposes that the first nine books were completed not long after the edict of Milan and before the outbreak of the quarrel between Constantine and Licinius in 314. There is considerable to be said in favor of this theory. The language used in the dedication of the tenth book seems to imply that the nine books had been completed some time before, and that the tenth is added as a sort of postscript. The close of the ninth book strengthens

that conclusion. Moreover, it would seem from the last sentences of that book that Constantine and Licinius were in perfect harmony at the time it was written, a state of affairs which did not exist after 314. On the other hand, it must be noticed that in Book IX. chap. 9 Licinius' "madness" is twice referred to as having "not yet" seized him (in §1 οὔπω μανέντος τοτε, and in §12 οὔπω τότε ἐφ' ἣν ὕστερον ἐκπέπτωκε μανίαν, τὴν διϵνοιαν ἐκτραπείς). It is necessary either to interpret both these clauses as later insertions (possibly by Eusebius' own hand at the time when he added the tenth book; cf. also p. 30, above), or to throw the composition of the ninth book down to the year 319 or later. It is difficult to decide between these alternatives, but I am inclined on the whole to think that Westcott's theory is probably correct, and that the two clauses can best be interpreted as later insertions. The very nature of his *History* would at any rate lead us to think that Eusebius spent some years in the composition of it, and that the earlier books, if not published, were at least completed long before the issue of the ten books as a whole. The *Chronicle* is referred to as already written in I. 1; the *Eclogæ Proph*. (? see below, p. 85) in I. 2 and 6; the *Collection of Ancient Martyrdoms* in IV. 15, V. preface, 4, and 22; the *Defense of Origen* in VI. 23, 33, and 36; the *Life of Pamphilus* in VI. 32, VII. 32, and VIII. 13. In VIII. 13 Eusebius speaks also of his intention of relating the sufferings of the martyrs in another work (but see above, p. 30).

§2. *The Author's Design*.

That the composition of a history of the Church was Eusebius' own idea, and was not due to any suggestion from without, seems clear, both from the absence of reference to any one else as prompting it, and from the lack of a dedication at the beginning of the work. The reasons which led him to undertake its composition seem to have been both scientific and apologetic. He lived, and he must have realized the fact, at the opening of a new age in the history of the Church. He believed, as he frequently tells us, that the period of struggle had come to an end, and that the Church was now about entering upon a new era of prosperity. He must have seen that it was a peculiarly fitting time to put on record for the benefit of posterity the great events which had taken place within the Church during the generations that were past, to sum up in one narrative all the trials and

triumphs which had now emerged in this final and greatest triumph, which he was witnessing. He wrote, as any historian of the present day would write, for the information and instruction of his contemporaries and of those who should come after, and yet there was in his mind all the time the apologetic purpose, the desire to exhibit to the world the history of Christianity as a proof of its divine origin and efficacy. The plan which he proposed to himself is stated at the very beginning of his work: "It is my purpose to write an account of the successions of the holy apostles, as well as of the times which have elapsed from the days of our Saviour to our own; and to relate how many and how important events are said to have occurred in the history of the Church; and to mention those who have governed and presided over the Church in the most prominent parishes, and those who in each generation have proclaimed the divine word either orally or in writing. It is my purpose also to give the names and the number and the times of those who through love of innovation have run into the greatest errors, and proclaiming themselves discoverers of knowledge, falsely so-called, have, like fierce wolves, unmercifully devastated the flock of Christ. It is my intention, moreover, to recount the misfortunes which immediately came upon the whole Jewish nation in consequence of their plots against our Saviour, and to record the ways and the times in which the divine word has been attacked by the Gentiles, and to describe the character of those who at various periods have contended for it in the face of blood and tortures, as well as the confessions which have been made in our own days, and finally the gracious and kindly succour which our Saviour afforded them all." It will be seen that Eusebius had a very comprehensive idea of what a history of the Church should comprise, and that he was fully alive to its importance.

§3. *Eusebius as a Historian. The Merits and Defects of his History.*

The whole Christian world has reason to be thankful that there lived at the opening of the fourth century a man who, with his life spanning one of the greatest epochs that has occurred in the history of the Church, with an intimate experimental knowledge of the old and of the new condition of things, was able to conceive so grand a plan and possessed the means and the ability to carry it out. Had he written nothing else, Eusebius' *Church*

History would have made him immortal; for if immortality be a fitting reward for large and lasting services, few possess a clearer title to it than the author of that work. The value of the *History* to us lies not in its literary merit, but in the wealth of the materials which it furnishes for a knowledge of the early Church. How many prominent figures of the first three centuries are known to us only from the pages of Eusebius; how many fragments, priceless on account of the light which they shed upon movements of momentous and far-reaching consequence, have been preserved by him alone; how often a hint dropped, a casual statement made in passing, or the mention of some apparently trifling event, gives the clue which enables us to unravel some perplexing labyrinth, or to fit into one whole various disconnected and apparently unrelated elements, and thus to trace the steps in the development of some important historical movement whose rise and whose bearing must otherwise remain an unsolved riddle. The work reveals no sympathy with Ebionism, Gnosticism, and Montanism, and little appreciation of their real nature, and yet our knowledge of their true significance and of their place in history is due in considerable part to facts respecting the movements or their leaders which Eusebius alone has recorded or preserved. To understand the development of the Logos Christology we must comprehend the significance of the teaching of Paul of Samosata, and how inadequate would our knowledge of the nature of that teaching be without the epistle quoted in Book VII. chap. 30. How momentous were the consequences of the paschal controversies, and how dark would they be were it not for the light shed upon them by our author. How important, in spite of their tantalizing brevity and obscurity, the fragments of Papias' writings; how interesting the extracts from the memoirs of Hegesippus; how suggestive the meager notices from Dionysius of Corinth, from Victor of Rome, from Melito, from Caius; how instructive the long and numerous quotations from the epistles of Dionysius of Alexandria! He may often fail to appreciate the significance of the events which he records, he may in many cases draw unwarranted conclusions from the premises which he states, he may sometimes misinterpret his documents and misunderstand men and movements, but in the majority of cases he presents us with the material upon which to form our own judgments, and if we differ with him we must at the same time thank him for the data which have enabled us

independently to reach other results.

But the value of Eusebius' *Church History* does not lie solely in the fact that it contains so many original sources which would be otherwise unknown to us. It is not merely a thesaurus, it is a history in the truest sense, and it possesses an intrinsic value of its own, independent of its quotations from other works. Eusebius possessed extensive sources of knowledge no longer accessible to us. His *History* contains the results of his extended perusal of many works which are now irrecoverably lost, of his wide acquaintance with the current traditions of his day, of his familiar intercourse with many of the chief men of the age. If we cut out all the documents which he quotes, there still remains an extensive history whose loss would leave an irreparable blank in our knowledge of the early Church. How invaluable, for instance, to mention but one matter, are the researches of our author in regard to the circulation of the books of the New Testament; his testimony to the condition of the canon in his own time, and to the more or less widespread use of particular writings by the Fathers of preceding centuries. Great as is the value of the sources which Eusebius quotes, those that he does not give are still more extensive, and it is the knowledge gained from them which he has transmitted to us.

The worth of these portions of his *History* must depend in the first place upon the extent and reliability of his sources, and in the second place upon the use which he made of them.

A glance at the list of his authorities given in the index, reveals at once the immense range of his materials. The number of books which he either quotes or refers to as read is enormous. When to these are added the works employed by him in the composition of his *Præp. Evang.*, as well as the great number which he must have perused, but does not mention, we are amazed at the extent of his reading. He must have been a voracious reader from his earliest years, and he must have possessed extraordinary acquisitive powers. It is safe to say that there was among the Fathers, with the possible exception of Origen, no more learned man than he. He thus possessed one of the primary qualifications of the historian. And yet even in this respect he had his limitations. He seems to have taken no pains to acquaint himself with the works of heretics, but to have been content to take his knowledge of them at second hand. And still further, he was sadly ignorant

of Latin literature and of the Latin Church in general (see below, p. 106); in fact, we must not expect to glean from his *History* a very thorough or extended knowledge of western Christendom.

But his sources were not confined to literary productions. He had a wide acquaintance with the world, and he was enabled to pick up much from his intercourse with other men and with different peoples that he could not have found upon the shelves of the Cæsarean or of any other library. Moreover, he had access to the archives of state and gathered from them much information quite inaccessible to most men. He was thus peculiarly fitted, both by nature and by circumstances, for the task of acquiring material, the first task of the genuine historian.

But the value of his work must depend in the second place upon the wisdom and honesty with which he used his sources, and upon the faithfulness and accuracy with which he reproduced the results thus reached. We are therefore led to enquire as to his qualifications for this part of his work.

We notice, in the first place, that he was very diligent in the use of his sources. Nothing seems to have escaped him that might in any way bear upon the particular subject in hand. When he informs us that a certain author nowhere mentions a book or an event, he is, so far as I am aware, never mistaken. When we realize how many works he read entirely through for the sake of securing a single historical notice, and how many more he must have read without finding anything to his purpose, we are impressed with his untiring diligence. Today, with our convenient indexes, and with the references at hand which have been made by many other men who have studied the writings of the ancients, we hardly comprehend what an amount of labor the production of a *History* like Eusebius' must have cost him, a pioneer in that kind of work.

In the second place, we are compelled to admire the sagacity which our author displays in the selection of his materials. He possessed the true instinct of the historian, which enabled him to pick out the salient points and to present to the reader just that information which he most desires. We shall be surprised upon examining his work to see how little it contains which it is not of the utmost importance for the student of early Church history to know, and how shrewdly the author has anticipated most of the

questions which such a student must ask. He saw what it was in the history of the first three centuries of the Church which posterity would most desire to know, and he told them. His wisdom in this respect is all the more remarkable when compared with the unwisdom of most of his successors, who filled their works with legends of saints and martyrs, which, however fascinating they may have been to the readers of that age, possess little either of interest or of value for us. When he wishes to give us a glimpse of the persecutions of those early days, his historical and literary instinct leads him to dwell especially upon two thoroughly representative cases—the martyrdom of Polycarp and the sufferings of the churches of Lyons and Vienne—and to preserve for posterity two of the noblest specimens of martyrological literature which the ancient Church produced. It is true that he sometimes erred in his judgment as to the wants of future readers; we could wish that he had been somewhat fuller and clearer on many points, and that he had not so entirely neglected some others; but on the whole I am of the opinion that few historical works, ancient or modern, have in the same compass better fulfilled their mission in this respect.

In the third place, we can hardly fail to be impressed by the wisdom with which Eusebius discriminated between reliable and unreliable sources. Judged by the modern standard he may fall short as a literary critic, but judged by the standard of antiquity he must be given a very high rank. Few indeed are the historians of ancient times, secular or ecclesiastical, who can compare with Eusebius for sound judgment in this matter. The general freedom of his work from the fables and prodigies, and other improbable or impossible tales which disfigure the pages of the great majority even of the soberest of ancient historians, is one of its most marked features. He shows himself uncommonly particular in demanding good evidence for the circumstances which he records, and uncommonly shrewd in detecting spurious and unreliable sources. When we remember the great number of pseudonymous works which were current in his day we are compelled to admire his care and his discrimination. Not that he always succeeded in detecting the false. More than once he was sadly at fault (as for instance in regard to the Abgarus correspondence and Josephus' testimony to Christ), and has in consequence been severely denounced or held up to unsparing ridicule by many modern writers. But the wonder certainly is not that he erred as

often as he did, but that he did not err oftener; not that he was sometimes careless in regard to the reliability of his sources, but that he was ever as careful as, in the majority of cases, he has proved himself to be. In fact, comparing him with other writers of antiquity, we cannot commend too highly the care and the skill with which he usually discriminated between the true and the false.

In the fourth place, he deserves all praise for his constant sincerity and unfailing honesty. I believe that emphasis should be laid upon this point for the reason that Eusebius' reputation has often suffered sadly in consequence of the unjust imputations, and the violent accusations, which it was for a long time the fashion to make against him, and which lead many still to treat his statements with distrust, and his character with contempt. Gibbon's estimate of his honesty is well known and has been unquestioningly accepted in many quarters, but it is none the less unjust, and in its implications quite untrue to the facts. Eusebius does dwell with greater fullness upon the virtues than upon the vices of the early Church, upon its glory than upon its shame, and he tells us directly that it is his intention so to do (*H. E.* VIII. 2), but he never undertakes to conceal the sins of the Christians, and the chapter immediately preceding contains a denunciation of their corruptness and wickedness uttered in no faint terms. In fact, in the face of these and other candid passages in his work, it is the sheerest injustice to charge him with dishonesty and unfairness because he prefers, as almost any Christian historian must, to dwell with greater fullness of detail upon the bright than upon the dark side of the picture. Scientific, Eusebius' method, in this respect, doubtless is not; but dishonest, no one has a right to call it. The most severe attack which has been made upon Eusebius in recent years is found in an article by Jachmann (see below, p. 55). The evident animus which runs through his entire paper is very unpleasant; the conclusions which he draws are, to say the least, strained. I cannot enter here into a consideration of his positions; most of them are examined below in the notes upon the various passages which he discusses. The whole article, like most similar attacks, proceeds upon the supposition that our author is guilty, and then undertakes simply to find evidence of that which is already presupposed. I submit that few writers could endure such an ordeal. If Eusebius is tried according to the principles of common justice, and of sound literary criticism, I am

convinced, after long and careful study, that his sincerity and honesty of purpose cannot be impeached. The particular instances which have been urged as proving his dishonesty will be discussed below in the notes upon the respective passages, and to those the reader is referred.

Eusebius' critics are wont to condemn him severely for what they are pleased to call the dishonesty displayed by him in his *Vita Constantini*. Such critics forget, apparently, that that work pretends to be, not a history, but a panegyric. Judging it as such, I am unable to find anything in it which leads me to entertain for a moment a suspicion of the author's honesty. It is true that Eusebius emphasizes the Emperor's good qualities, and fails to mention the darker spots in his character; but so far as I am aware he misstates no facts, and does only what those who eulogize deceased friends are accustomed to do the world over. For a discussion of this matter the reader is referred to the prolegomena of Dr. Richardson, pp. 467 sq. of this volume. I am pleased to learn from him that his study of the *Vita* has shown him nothing which justifies the charge of dishonesty brought against Eusebius.

One of the most decisive marks of veracity upon the part of our author is the frankness with which he confesses his lack of knowledge upon any subject (cf. IV. 5), and the care with which he distinguishes between the different kinds of evidence upon which he bases his statements. How frequently the phrases λόγος ἔχει, φασί, λέγεται, &c., occur in connection with accounts which a less scrupulous historian would not hesitate to record as undoubted fact. How particular he is to mention his sources for any unusual or startling event. If the authorities seem to him quite inadequate, he simply omits all reference to an occurrence which most of his contemporaries and successors would have related with the greatest gusto; if the testimony seems to him strong, he records the circumstance and expressly mentions his authority, whether oral tradition, the testimony of eye-witnesses, or written accounts, and we are thus furnished the material from which to form our own judgments.

He is often blamed by modern writers for what they are pleased to call his excessive credulity. Those who accuse him thus seem to forget that he lived in the fourth, not in the nineteenth century. That he believed many things which we now declare to be incredible is perfectly true, but that he

believed things that other Christians of his day pronounced incredible is not true. Judged, in fact, according to the standard of his age—and indeed of eleven succeeding centuries—he must be pronounced remarkably free from the fault of over-credulity, in truth uncommonly skeptical in his attitude toward the marvelous. Not that he denies the occurrence of prodigies and wonders in his own and other ages, but that he always demands the strongest testimony before he allows himself to be convinced of their truth. Compare, e.g., the care with which he gives his authorities for the anecdote in regard to the Thundering Legion (V. 5), and his final suspension of judgment in the matter; compare also the emphasis which he lays upon the personal testimony of the Emperor in the matter of the appearance of the sign of the cross in the sky (*Vita Const*. I. 28 sq.), a phenomenon which he himself tells us that he would have believed upon no ordinary evidence. His conduct in this matter is a sign rather of a skepticism uncommon in his age than of an excessive and unusual credulity. Gibbon himself gives our author due credit in this respect, when he speaks of his character as "less tinctured with credulity, and more practiced in the arts of courts, than that of almost any of his contemporaries" (*Decline and Fall*, chap. XVI.).

On the other hand, Eusebius as an historian had many very grave faults which it is not my wish in the least to palliate or conceal. One of the most noticeable of these is his complete lack of any conception of historiography as a fine art. His work is interesting and instructive because of the facts which it records, but that interest is seldom if ever enhanced by his mode of presentation. There is little effective grouping, almost no sense of perspective, utter ignorance of the art of suggesting by a single line or phrase a finished picture of a man or of a movement. He was not, in other words, a Thucydides or a Tacitus; but the world has seen not many such as they.

A second and still more serious fault is our author's want of depth, if I may so express myself, his failure to look beneath the surface and to grasp the real significance of things, to trace the influence of opinions and events. We feel this defect upon every page. We read the annals, but we are conscious of no masterful mind behind them, digesting and comprehending them into one organic and imposing whole. This radical weakness in our author's method is revealed perhaps most clearly in his superficial and transcendental treatment of heretics and heresies, his failure

to appreciate their origin and their bearing upon the progress of Christian thought. Of a development in theology, in fact, he knows nothing, and hence his work lacks utterly that which we now look upon as the most instructive part of Church history—the history of doctrine.

In the third place, severe censure must be passed upon our author for his carelessness and inaccuracy in matters of chronology. We should expect that one who had produced the most extensive chronological work that had ever been given to the world, would be thoroughly at home in that province, but in truth his chronology is the most defective feature of his work. The difficulty is chiefly due to his inexcusable carelessness, we might almost say slovenliness, in the use of different and often contradictory sources of information. Instead of applying himself to the discrepancies, and endeavoring to reach the truth by carefully weighing the respective merits of the sources, or by testing their conclusions in so far as tests are possible, he adopts in many cases the results of both, apparently quite unsuspicious of the confusion consequent upon such a course. In fact, the critical spirit which actuates him in dealing with many other matters seems to leave him entirely when he is concerned with chronology; and instead of proceeding with the care and circumspection of an historian, he accepts what he finds with the unquestioning faith of a child. There is no case in which he can be convicted of disingenuousness, but at times his obtuseness is almost beyond belief. An identity of names, or a resemblance between events recorded by different authors, will often be enough to lead him all unconsciously to himself into the most absurd and contradictory conclusions. Instances of this may be seen in Book I. chap. 5, and in II. 11. His confusion in regard to the various Antonines (see especially the note on the preface to Book V.) is not at all unusual among the writers of his day, and in view of the frequent and perplexing use of the same names by the different emperors, might be quite excusable in a less scholarly man than Eusebius, but in his case it is evidence of unpardonable want of care. This serious defect in our author's method is not peculiar to him. Many historians, critical almost to a fault in most matters, accept the received chronology without question, and build upon it as if it were the surest of foundations. Such a consideration does not excuse Eusebius; it relieves him, however, of the stigma of peculiarity.

Finally, the character of the *History* is greatly impaired by our author's

desultory method. This is a characteristic of his literary work in general, and was referred to in the previous chapter. All his works are marred by it, but few suffer more noticeably than the *History*. The author does not confine himself as strictly as he should to the logical limits of the subject which he is treating, but allows himself to be led away from the main point by the suggestions that pour in upon him from all sides. As Lightfoot remarks, "We have not unfrequently to pick out from various parts of his work the notices bearing on one definite and limited subject. He relates a fact, or quotes an authority bearing upon it, in season or out of season, according as it is recalled to his memory by some accidental connexion." This unfortunate habit of Eusebius' is one into which men of wide learning are very apt to fall. The richness of their acquisitions embarrasses them, and the immense number of facts in their possession renders a comprehension of them all into one logical whole very difficult; and yet unless the facts be thus comprehended, unless they be thoroughly digested and arranged, the result is confusion and obscurity. To exclude is as necessary as to include, if one would write history with the highest measure of success; to exclude rigidly at one time what it is just as necessary to include at another. To men like Eusebius there is perhaps nothing more difficult than this. Only a mind as intensive as it is extensive, with a grasp as strong as its reach is wide, can accomplish it, and few are the minds that are blessed with both qualities. Few are the writers whose histories stand upon our shelves that fail not sadly in the one or in the other; and in few perhaps does the failure seem more marked than in our author.

And yet, though it is apparent that the value of Eusebius' work is greatly impaired by its desultory method of treatment, I am confident that the defect is commonly exaggerated. The paragraph which Lightfoot quotes from Westcott on this subject leaves a false impression. Altogether too often our author introduces irrelevant matters, and repeats himself when repetition "mars the symmetry of his work"; and yet on the whole he follows a fairly well ordered plan with fairly good success. He endeavors to preserve a strictly chronological sequence in his arrangement of the books, and he adheres for the most part to his purpose. Though there may be disorder and confusion within the various periods, for instance within the apostolic age, the age of Trajan, of Hadrian, of the Antonines, &c., yet the periods themselves are kept reasonably distinct from one another, and

having finished his account of one of them the author seldom returns to it. Even in his treatment of the New Testament canon, which is especially desultory, he says most of what he has to say about it in connection with the apostles themselves, and before passing on to the second century. I would not overlook the exceeding flagrancy of his desultoriness and repetitiousness in his accounts of the writings of many of the Fathers, especially of the two Clements, and yet I would emphasize the fact that he certainly had an outline plan which he designed to follow, and for which due credit should be given him. He compares favorably in this respect with at least most of the writers of antiquity. Only with our modern method of dividing history into periods, separated by natural boundary lines, and of handling it under clearly defined rubrics, have we become able wholly to avoid the confused and illogical treatment of Eusebius and of others like him.

Testimonies of the Ancients in Favor of Eusebius[2].

From Constantine's Letter to the Antiochians (in Eusebius' *Life of Constantine,* Book III. chap. 60).

"I confess, then, that on reading your records I perceived, by the highly eulogistic testimony which they bear to Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea (whom I have myself long well known and esteemed for his learning and moderation), that you are strongly attached to him and desire to appropriate him as your own prelate. What thoughts then do you suppose that I entertain on this subject, desirous as I am to seek for and act on the strict principles of right? What anxiety do you imagine this desire of yours has caused me? O holy faith, who givest us in our Saviour's words and precepts a model, as it were, of what our life should be, how hardly wouldst thou thyself resist the course of sin were it not that thou refusest to subserve the purposes of gain! In my own judgment, he whose first object is the maintenance of peace seems to be superior to Victory herself; and where a right and honorable course lies open to one's choice, surely no one would hesitate to adopt it. I ask then, brethren, why do we so decide as to inflict an injury on others by our choice? Why do we covet those objects which will destroy the credit of our own character? I myself highly esteem the individual whom ye judge worthy of your respect and affection; notwithstanding, it cannot be right that those principles should be entirely disregarded which should be authoritative and binding on all alike; for

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[2] The following *Testimonies of the Ancients* were collected by Valesius, and are printed in the original languages in his edition of Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica,* at the close of his *Vita Eusebii.* The order of Valesius has been preserved in the following pages, but occasionally a passage, for the sake of greater clearness, has been given more fully than by him. A few extracts have been omitted (as noted below), and one or two, overlooked by him, have been added. The extracts have all been translated from the original for this edition, with the exception of the quotations from the *Life of Constantine,* and from the Greek Ecclesiastical Historians—Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Evagrius—which have been copied, with a few necessary corrections, from the version found in Bagster's edition of the *Greek Ecclesiastical Historians.* The translation has been made at my request by Mr. James McDonald, of Shelbyville, Ky., a member of the senior class (1890) of Lane Theological Seminary.

example, that each should be content with the limits assigned them, and that all should enjoy their proper privileges; nor can it be right in considering the claims of rival candidates to suppose but that not one only, but many, may appear worthy of comparison with this person. For as long as no violence or harshness are suffered to disturb the dignities of the Church, they continue to be on an equal footing, and worthy of the same consideration everywhere. Nor is it reasonable that an enquiry into the qualifications of one person should be made to the detriment of others; since the judgment of all churches, whether reckoned of greater importance in themselves, is equally capable of receiving and maintaining the divine ordinances, so that one is in no way inferior to another (if we will but boldly declare the truth), in regard to that standard of practice which is common to all. If this be so, we must say that you will be chargeable, not with retaining this prelate, but with wrongfully removing him; your conduct will be characterized rather by violence than justice; and whatever may be generally thought by others, I dare clearly and boldly affirm that this measure will furnish ground of accusation against you, and will provoke factious disturbances of the most mischievous kind; for even timid flocks can show the use and power of their teeth when the watchful care of their shepherd declines, and they find themselves bereft of his accustomed guidance. If this then be really so, if I am not deceived in my judgment, let this, brethren, be your first consideration (for many and important considerations will immediately present themselves, if you adopt my advice), whether, should you persist in your intention, that mutual kindly feeling and affection which should subsist among you will suffer no diminution? In the next place remember that Eusebius, who came among you for the purpose of offering disinterested counsel, now enjoys the reward which is due to him in the judgment of heaven; for he has received no ordinary recompense in the high testimony you have borne to his equitable conduct. Lastly, in accordance with your usual sound judgment, do ye exhibit a becoming diligence in selecting the person of whom you stand in need, carefully avoiding all factious and tumultuous clamor; for such clamor is always wrong, and from the collision of discordant elements both sparks and flame will arise."

From the Emperor's Letter to Eusebius (in Eusebius' *Life of Constantine,* Book III. chap. 61).

"I have most carefully perused your letter, and perceive that you have strictly conformed to the rule enjoined by the discipline of the Church. Now to abide by that which appears at the same time pleasing to God, and accordant with apostolic tradition, is a proof of true piety; and you have reason to deem yourself happy on this behalf, that you are counted worthy, in the judgment, I may say, of all the world, to have the oversight of the whole Church. For the desire which all feel to claim you for their own, undoubtedly enhances your enviable fortune in this respect. Notwithstanding, your Prudence, whose resolve it is to observe the ordinances of God and the apostolic rule of the Church, has done excellently well in declining the bishopric of the Church at Antioch, and desiring to continue in that Church of which you first received the oversight by the will of God."

From Constantine's Letter to the Council (in Eusebius' *Life of Constantine,* Book III. chap. 62).

"I have perused the letters written by your Prudence, and highly approve of the wise resolution of your colleague in the ministry, Eusebius. Having, moreover, been informed of the circumstances of the case, partly by your letters, partly by those of our illustrious friends Acacius and Strategius, after sufficient investigation I have written to the people at Antioch, suggesting the course which will be at once pleasing to God and advantageous for the Church. A copy of this I have ordered to be subjoined to this present letter, in order that ye yourselves may know what I thought fit, as an advocate of the cause of justice, to write to that people; since I find in your letter this proposal, that, in consonance with the choice of the people, sanctioned by your own desire, Eusebius the holy bishop of Cæsarea should preside over and take the charge of the Church at Antioch. Now the letters of Eusebius himself on this subject appeared to be strictly accordant with the order prescribed by the Church."

From a Letter of Constantine to Eusebius (in Eusebius' *Life of Constantine,* Book IV. chap. 35).

"It is indeed an arduous task, and beyond the power of language itself, worthily to treat of the mysteries of Christ, and to explain in a fitting manner the controversy respecting the feast of Easter, its origin as well as its precious and toilsome accomplishment. For it is not in the power even

of those who are able to apprehend them, adequately to describe the things of God. I am, notwithstanding, filled with admiration of your learning and zeal, and have not only myself read your work with pleasure, but have given directions, according to your own desire, that it be communicated to many sincere followers of our holy religion. Seeing, then, with what pleasure we receive favors of this kind from your Sagacity, be pleased to gladden us more frequently with those compositions, to the practice of which, indeed, you confess yourself to have been trained from an early period, so that I am urging a willing man (as they say), in exhorting you to your customary pursuits. And certainly the high and confident judgment we entertain is a proof that the person who has translated your writings into the Latin tongue is in no respect incompetent to the task, impossible though it be that such version should fully equal the excellence of the works themselves."

From a Letter of Constantine to Eusebius (in Eusebius' *Life of Constantine,* Book IV. chap. 36).

"It happens, through the favoring providence of God our Saviour, that great numbers have united themselves to the most holy Church in the city which is called by my name. It seems, therefore, highly requisite, since that city is rapidly advancing in prosperity in all other respects, that the number of Churches should also be increased. Do you, therefore, receive with all readiness my determination on this behalf. I have thought it expedient to instruct your Prudence to order fifty copies of the sacred scriptures (the provision and use of which you know to be most needful for the instruction of the Church) to be written on prepared parchment in a legible manner, and in a commodious and portable form, by transcribers thoroughly practiced in their art. The procurator of the diocese has also received instructions by letter from our Clemency to be careful to furnish all things necessary for the preparation of such copies; and it will be for you to take special care that they be completed with as little delay as possible. You have authority also, in virtue of this letter, to use two of the public carriages for their conveyance, by which arrangement the copies when fairly written will most easily be forwarded for my personal inspection; and one of the deacons of your Church may be intrusted with this service, who, on his arrival here, shall experience my liberality. God preserve you, beloved brother!"

From the Epistle of Eusebius of Nicomedia, to Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre (given by Theodoret in his *Eccles. Hist*. I. 6).

"Neither has the zeal of my lord Eusebius concerning the truth, nor thy silence in this matter been unknown, but has reached even us. And, as was fitting, on the one hand we have rejoiced on account of my lord Eusebius; but on the other, we are grieved on thy account, since we look upon the silence of such a man as a condemnation of our cause."

From the Book of Basil, to Amphilochius, on the Holy Spirit (chap. 29).

"If to any one Eusebius of Palestine seem trustworthy on account of his great experience, we give his own words in the *Difficulties concerning the Polygamy of the Ancients.*"

From the Book of Questions on the Old and New Testaments, which is published among the Works of Augustine (chap. 125).

"We remember to have read in a certain pamphlet of Eusebius, a man formerly distinguished among the rest of men, that not even the Holy Spirit knows the mystery of the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and I wonder that a man of so great learning should have imposed this stigma upon the Holy Spirit."

From Jerome's Epistle to Pammachius and Oceanus (*Ep.* 65).

"Apollinarius wrote the very strongest books against Porphyry; Eusebius has excellently composed his *Ecclesiastical History.* Of these men, one taught an incomplete human nature in Christ; the other was a most open defender of the heresy of Arius."

From the Apology of Jerome against Rufinus (Book I. chap. 8).

"As I have already said, Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, formerly leader of the Arian party, has written six books in defense of Origen—a very extensive and elaborate work; with much evidence he has proved that Origen was, from his point of view, a Catholic, that is, from ours, an Arian."

From the same book (chap. 9).

"For Eusebius himself, a friend, eulogist and companion of Pamphilus, has written three very elegant books comprising a life of Pamphilus. In these, after extolling other things with wondrous praises and exalting his humility

to the skies, he also adds this in the third book," &c.

And a little farther on in the same book (chap. 11).

"I have praised Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History,* in his *Chronological Canons,* in his *Description of the Holy Land;* and turning these same little works into Latin I have given them to those of my own tongue. Am I therefore an Arian, because Eusebius who wrote these books is an Arian?"

From Jerome's second book against Rufinus (chap. 16).

"Eusebius, a very learned man (I have said learned, not Catholic; lest after the usual manner, even in this thing, thou heap calumny upon me), in six volumes does nothing else than show Origen to be of his own faith; that is, of the Arian heresy."

From the Preface of Jerome's Book on Hebrew Topography.

"Eusebius, who took his surname from the blessed martyr Pamphilus, after the ten books of his *Ecclesiastical History,* after his *Chronological Canons,* which we have published in the Latin tongue, after his *Names of Various Nations,* in which he showed how these were formerly, and are now, called among the Hebrews; after his *Topography of the Land of Judea, with the inheritances of the tribes;* after his *Jerusalem,* also, and his *Plan of the Temple, with a very brief explanation,*—after all these he has finally in this little work labored that he might collect for us from Holy Scripture the names of almost all the cities, mountains, rivers, villages, and divers places, which either remain the same, or have since been changed, or else have become corrupted from some source, wherefore we also, following the zeal of this admirable man," &c.

From Jerome's Book on Ecclesiastical Writers (chap. 61).

"Hippolytus, bishop of a certain church (I have not indeed been able to find out the name of the city), wrote a reckoning of Easter, and chronological tables up to the first year of the Emperor Alexander, and hit upon a cycle of sixteen years which the Greeks call ἑκκαιδεκαετηρίδα; and gave an occasion to Eusebius, who also composed an Easter canon, with a cycle of nineteen years, that is ἐννεαδεκαετηρίδα."

From the same book (chap. 81).

"Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, a man most studious in the sacred Scriptures, and along with Pamphilus the martyr a most diligent investigator of sacred literature, has edited an infinite number of volumes, some of which are these: of the *Demonstratio Evangelica,* twenty books; of the *Præparatio Evangelica,* fifteen books; of the *Theophania,* five books; of the *Ecclesiastical History,* ten books; a *General History in Chronological Tables,* and an *Epitome* of them; also, *On the Discrepancies of the Gospels; On Isaiah,* ten books; and *Against Porphyry* (who at the same time was writing in Sicily, as some think), thirty books, of which only twenty have come to my notice; of his *Topica,* one book; of the *Apologia,* in defense of Origen, six books; *On the Life of Pamphilus,* three books; *Concerning the Martyrs,* other small works; also very learned commentaries on the hundred and fifty Psalms, and many other writings. He flourished chiefly under the emperors Constantine and Constantius; and on account of his friendship with Pamphilus the martyr, he took from him his surname."

From the same book (chap. 96).

"Eusebius, by nation a Sardinian, and, after being reader in Rome, bishop of Vercellæ, on account of his confession of the faith banished by the Prince Constantius to Scythopolis, and thence to Cappadocia, under Julian the emperor sent back to the Church, has published the *Commentaries on the Psalms* of Eusebius of Cæsarea, which he had translated from Greek into Latin."

Jerome in the Preface to his Commentaries on Daniel.

"Against the prophet Daniel Porphyry wrote a twelfth volume, denying that that book was composed by him with whose name it is inscribed, &c. To him Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, has replied very skillfully in three volumes, that is, in volumes XVIII., XIX., and XX. Apollinarius also in one large volume, that is, in the twenty-sixth volume, and before these, in part, Methodius."

Jerome on the Twenty-fourth Chapter of Matthew.

"Concerning this place, that is, concerning the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place, Porphyry has uttered many blasphemies against us in the thirteenth volume of his work. To whom Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, has

replied in three volumes, that is, in volumes XVIII., XIX., and XX."

The same, in his Epistle to Magnus (*Ep.* 84).

"Celsus and Porphyry have written against us. To the former Origen, to the latter Methodius, Eusebius, and Apollinarius have very vigorously replied. Of whom Origen wrote eight books, Methodius proceeded as far as ten thousand lines, Eusebius and Apollinarius composed twenty-five and thirty volumes respectively."

The same, in his Epistle to Pammachius and Oceanus (*Ep.* 65).

"What more skillful, more learned, more eloquent men can be found than Eusebius and Didymus, the advocates of Origen? The former of whom, in the six volumes of his *Apologia,* proves that he [Origen] was of the same opinion as himself."

Jerome, in the Preface to his Commentaries on Isaiah.

"Eusebius Pamphili also has published an historical commentary in fifteen volumes." The same, in the Preface to the Fifth Book of his Commentaries on Isaiah.

"Shall I take upon myself a work at which the most learned men have labored hard? I speak of Origen and Eusebius Pamphili. Of these the former wanders afar in the free spaces of allegory, and his genius so interprets single names as to make out of them the sacred things of the Church. The latter, while promising in his title an historical exposition, meanwhile forgets his purpose, and yields himself up to the tenets of Origen."

The same, in the fifth book of his Commentaries on Isaiah.

"Eusebius of Cæsarea, while promising in his title an historical exposition, strays off in divers notions; while reading his books I found much else than what he gave promise of in his title. For wherever history has failed him, he has crossed over into allegory; and in such a manner does he unite things that are distinct, that I wonder at his joining together by a new art of discourse stone and iron into one body."

Jerome on the first chapter of Matthew.

"This [chapter] also Africanus, a writer of chronology, and Eusebius of

Cæsarea, in his books on the *Discrepancies of the Gospels,* have discussed more fully."

Rufinus in his Epistle to the Bishop Chromatius.

"You charge me to translate into Latin the *Ecclesiastical History*, which the very learned Eusebius of Cæsarea wrote in the Greek tongue."

Augustine, in his Book on Heresies (chap. 83).

"When I had searched through the *History* of Eusebius, to which Rufinus, after having himself translated it into the Latin tongue, has also added two books of subsequent history, I did not find any heresy which I had not read among these very ones, except that one which Eusebius inserts in his sixth book, stating that it had existed in Arabia. Therefore these heretics, since he assigns them no founder, we may call Arabians, who declared that the soul dies and is destroyed along with the body, and that at the end of the world both are raised again. But he states that they were very quickly corrected, these by the disputation of Origen in person, and those by his exhortation."

Antipater, Bishop of Bostra, in his First Book against Eusebius of Cæsarea's Apology for Origen.

"Since now this man was very learned, having searched out and traced back all the books and writings of the more ancient writers, and having set forth the opinions of almost all of them, and having left behind very many writings, some of which are worthy of all acceptation, making use of such an estimation as this of the man, they attempt to lead away some, saying, that Eusebius would not have chosen to take this view, unless he had accurately ascertained that all the opinions of the ancients required it. I, indeed, agree and admit that the man was very learned, and that not anything of the more ancient writings escaped his knowledge; for, taking advantage of the imperial co-operation, he was enabled easily to collect for his use material from whatever quarter."

From the First Book of Extracts from the Ecclesiastical History of Philostorgius.

"Philostorgius, while praising Eusebius Pamphili both as to whatever of worth belongs to his histories and as to other things, yet declares that with

regard to religion he has fallen into great error; and that he impiously sets forth this error of his in detail, holding that the Deity is unknowable and incomprehensible. Moreover, he holds that he has also gone astray on other such things. But he unites with others in attesting that he brought his *History* down to the accession of the sons of Constantine the Great."

Socrates in the First Book of his Ecclesiastical History (chap. 1).

"Eusebius, surnamed Pamphilus (i.e. universally beloved), has composed a History of the Church in ten books, brought down to the time of the Emperor Constantine, when the persecution ceased which Diocletian had commenced against the Christians. But, in writing the life of Constantine, this author has very slightly treated of the Arian controversy, being evidently more intent on a highly wrought eulogium of the emperor than an accurate statement of facts."

The same Socrates in the Eighth Chapter of the same Book, speaking of Sabinus, Bishop of Macedonia, who had written a History of the Synod, says:

"Yet he commends Eusebius Pamphilus as a witness worthy of credit, and praises the Emperor as capable in stating Christian doctrines; but he still brands the faith which was declared at Nice as having been set forth by ignorant men, and such as had no intelligence in the matter. Thus he voluntarily contemns the testimony of a man whom he himself pronounces a wise and true witness; for Eusebius declares that of the ministers of God who were present at the Nicene Synod, some were eminent for the word of wisdom, others for the strictness of their life; and that the Emperor himself being present, leading all into unanimity, established unity of judgment, and conformity of opinion among them."

The same Socrates, in Book II. chap. 21.

"But since some have attempted to stigmatize Eusebius Pamphilus as having favored the Arian views in his works, it may not be irrelevant here to make a few remarks respecting him. In the first place, then, he was present at the council of Nice, and gave his assent to what was there determined in reference to the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, and in the third book of the *Life of Constantine*, he thus expressed himself: '*The Emperor incited all to unanimity, until he had rendered them united in judgment on those points on which they were previously at variance; so that they*

were quite agreed at Nice in matters of faith.' Since, therefore, Eusebius, in mentioning the Nicene Synod, says that all differences were composed, and that unanimity of sentiment prevailed, what ground is there for assuming that he was himself an Arian? The Arians are certainly deceived in supposing him to be a favorer of their tenets. But some one will perhaps say that in his discourses he seems to have adopted the opinions of Arius, because of his frequently saying *by Christ*. Our answer is that ecclesiastical writers often use this mode of expression, and others of a similar kind denoting the *economy* of our Saviour's humanity; and that before all these the apostle made use of such expressions without ever being accounted a teacher of false doctrine. Moreover, inasmuch as Arius has dared to say that the Son is a creature, as one of the others, observe what Eusebius says on this subject in his first book against Marcellus:

"'*He alone, and no other, has been declared to be, and is the only-begotten Son of God; whence any one would justly censure those who have presumed to affirm that he is a Creature made of nothing, like the rest of the creatures; for how then would he be a Son? and how could he be God's only-begotten, were he assigned the same nature as the other creatures, and were he one of the many created things, seeing that he, like them, would in that case be partaker of a creation from nothing? The sacred Scriptures do not thus instruct us concerning these things.*' He again adds a little afterwards: '*Whoever then determines that the Son is made of things that are not, and that he is a creature produced from nothing pre-existing, forgets that while he concedes the name of Son, he denies him to be so in reality. For he that is made of nothing cannot truly be the Son of God, any more than the other things which have been made; but the true Son of God, forasmuch as he is begotten of the Father, is properly denominated the only-begotten and beloved of the Father. For this reason also, he himself is God; for what can the offspring of God be but the perfect resemblance of him who begat him? A sovereign, indeed, builds a city, but does not beget it; and is said to beget a son, not to build one. An artificer may be called the framer, but not the father of his work; while he could by no means be styled the framer of him whom he had begotten. So also the God of the Universe is the father of the Son; but would be fitly termed the Framer and Maker of the world. And although it is once said in Scripture*, The Lord created me the beginning of his ways on account of his works, *yet it becomes us to consider the import of this phrase, which I shall hereafter explain; and not, as Marcellus has done, from a single passage to subvert*

one of the most important doctrines of the Church.'

"These and many other such expressions are found in the first book of Eusebius Pamphilus against Marcellus; and in his third book, declaring in what sense the term creature is to be taken, he says: '*Accordingly these things being established, it follows that in the same sense as that which preceded, these words also are to be understood*, The Lord created me in the beginning of his ways on account of his works. *For although he says that he was created, it is not as if he should say that he had arrived at existence from what was not, nor that he himself also was made of nothing like the rest of the creatures, which some have erroneously supposed; but as subsisting, living, pre-existing, and being before the constitution of the whole world; and having been appointed to rule the universe by his Lord and Father; the word created being here used instead of* ordained *or* constituted. *Certainly the apostle expressly called the rulers and governors among men* creature, *when he said*, Submit yourselves to every human *creature* for the Lord's sake; whether to the king as supreme, or to governors as those sent by him. *The prophet also does not use the word* ἔκτισενcreated *in the sense of* made of that which had no previous existence, *when he says*, Prepare, Israel, to invoke thy God. For behold he who confirms the thunder, creates the Spirit, and announces his Christ unto men. *For God did not then create the Spirit when he declared his Christ to all men, since* There is nothing new under the sun; *but the Spirit was, and subsisted before; but he was sent at what time the apostles were gathered together, when like thunder*, There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind; and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. *And thus they declared unto all men the Christ of God in accordance with that prophecy which says*, Behold he who confirms the thunder, creates the spirit, and announces his Christ unto men; *the word* creates *being used instead of* sends down, *or* appoints; *and* thunder *in a similar way implying* the preaching of the Gospel. *Again he that says*, Create in me a clean heart, O God, *said not this as if he had no heart; but prayed that his mind might be purified. Thus also it is said*, That he might create the two into one new man, *instead of* unite. *Consider also whether this passage is not of the same kind*, Clothe yourselves with the new man, which is created according to God; *and this*, if, therefore, any one be in Christ, he is a new creature, *and Whatever other expressions of a similar nature any one may find who shall carefully search the divinely-inspired Scripture. Wherefore one should not be surprised if in this passage*, The Lord created me the beginning of

his ways, *the term* created *is used metaphorically, instead of* appointed, *or* constituted.'

"These quotations from the books of Eusebius against Marcellus have been adduced to confute those who have slanderously attempted to traduce and criminate him. Neither can they prove that Eusebius attributes a beginning of subsistence to the Son of God, although they may find him often using the expressions of dispensation; and especially so, because he was an emulator and admirer of the works of Origen, in which those who are able to comprehend that author's writings, will perceive it to be everywhere stated that the Son was begotten of the Father. These remarks have been made in passing, in order to refute those who have misrepresented Eusebius."

Sozomen in the First Book of his Ecclesiastical History (chap. 1.).

"I at first felt strongly inclined to trace the course of events from the very commencement; but on reflecting that similar records of the past, up to their own time, had been compiled by the learned Clemens and Hegesippus, successors of the apostles, by Africanus the historian and Eusebius surnamed Pamphilus, a man intimately acquainted with the sacred Scriptures and the writings of the Greek poets and historians, I merely drew up an epitome in two books of all that is recorded to have happened to the churches, from the ascension of Christ to the deposition of Licinius."

Victorius in the Paschal Canon.

"Reviewing therefore the trustworthy histories of the ancients, namely the *Chronicles* and prologue of the blessed Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, a city in Palestine, a man pre-eminently accomplished and learned; and likewise those things which have been added to these same *Chronicles* by Jerome of sacred memory."

Jerome, in his Epistle to Chromatius and Heliodorus, prefixed to the Martyrology which bears Jerome's Name.

"It is evident that our Lord Jesus Christ obtains triumphs at every martyrdom of his saints, whose sufferings we find described by the saintly Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea. For when Constantine Augustus came to Cæsarea and told the celebrated bishop to ask some favors which should

benefit the church at Cæsarea, it is said that Eusebius answered: That a church enriched by its own resources was under no necessity of asking favors, yet that he himself had an unalterable desire, that whatever had been done in the Roman republic against God's saints by successive judges in the whole Roman world they should search out by a careful examination of the public records; and that they should draw from the archives themselves and send to Eusebius himself, by royal command, the names of the martyrs; under what judge, in what province or city, upon what day, and with what steadfastness, they had obtained the reward of their suffering. Whence it has come about that, being an able narrator and a diligent historiographer, he has both composed an *Ecclesiastical History* and has set forth the triumphs of nearly all of the martyrs of all the Roman provinces."

Pope Gelasius in his Decree concerning the Apocryphal Books.

"Likewise as to the *Chronicles* of Eusebius and the books of his *Ecclesiastical History*, although in the first book of his narration he has grown cold, and has afterwards written one book in praise and in defense of Origen the schismatic, yet on account of his singular knowledge of things which pertain to instruction, we do not say that they ought to be rejected."

The same in his book On the Two Natures.

"That saying the same thing with one heart and one mouth we may also believe what we have received from our forefathers, and, God giving them to us, that we may hand them down to posterity to be believed in, with which things the adduced testimony of the Catholic masters, being summed up, bear witness that a united faith in a gracious God endures."

And a little farther on.

"From the exposition of the seventh psalm, by Eusebius, bishop in Palestine, by surname Pamphili, etc. Likewise from his *Præparatio Evangelica*, Book VII."

Pope Pelagius II. in his Third Epistle to Elias of Aquileia and other Bishops of Istria.

"For, indeed, among hæresiarchs who can be found worse than

Origen, and among historiographers who more honorable than Eusebius? And who of us does not know with how great praises Eusebius extols Origen in his books? But because the holy Church deals more kindly with the hearts of her faithful ones than she does severely with their words, neither could the testimony of Eusebius remove him from his proper place among heretics, nor on the other hand has she condemned Eusebius for the fault of praising Origen."

Evagrius, in the First Book of his Ecclesiastical History (chap. 1).

"Eusebius Pamphili—an especially able writer, to the extent, in particular, of inducing his readers to embrace our religion, though failing to perfect them in the faith—and Sozomen, Theodoret, and Socrates have produced a most excellent record of the advent of our compassionate God, and his ascension into heaven, and of all that has been achieved in the endurance of the divine Apostles, as well as of the other martyrs," etc.

Gregory the Great in his Epistle to Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria.

"I have now become one of the number of hearers, to whom your Holiness has taken the pains to write, that we ought to transmit the deeds of all the martyrs which have been collected by Eusebius of Cæsarea in the age of Constantine of holy memory. But I was not aware before receiving your Holiness' letter whether these things had been collected or not. I therefore am thankful that being informed by the writings of your most holy learning, I have begun to know what I did not know before. For excepting these things which are contained in the books of this same Eusebius *On the deeds of the holy martyrs*, I have met with nothing else in the archives of this our church, nor in the libraries of Rome, except some few collected in a single volume."

Gelasius of Cyzicus in his Second Book On the Council of Nicæa (chap. 1).

"Let us hear now what says this the most illustrious husbandman in ecclesiastical farming, the most truth-loving Eusebius, surnamed after the celebrated Pamphilus. Licinius, indeed, he says, having followed the same path of impiety with the ungodly tyrants, has justly been brought to the same precipice with them, etc. (which may be found at the end of the tenth book of the *Ecclesiastical History*). As to Eusebius Pamphili, the most trustworthy of ancient ecclesiastical historians, who has investigated and set

forth so many struggles, having made a choice from among his simply written works, we say that in all ten books of his *Ecclesiastical History* he has left behind an accurately written work. Beginning with the advent of our Lord he has, not without much labor, proceeded as far as those times. For how else could it be with him who took so great care to preserve for us the harmony of this collection? But as I have just said, he brought to bear upon it much study and an untold amount of labor. But let no one suppose, from those things which have been alleged with regard to him, that this man ever adopted the heresy of Arius; but let him be sure, that even if he did speak somewhat of, and did write briefly concerning the conjectures of Arius, he certainly did not do it on account of his entertaining the impious notion of that man, but from artless simplicity, as indeed he himself fully assures us in his Apology, which he distributed generally among orthodox bishops."

The author of the Alexandrian Chronicle (p. 582).

"The very learned Eusebius Pamphili has written thus: As the Jews crucified Christ at the feast, so they all perished at their own feast."

Nicephorus in the Sixth Book of his History (chap. 37).

"Upon whose authority also we know of the divine Pamphilus as both living the life of a philosopher and wearing the dignity of presbyter in that place. His life and every event in it, also his establishing in that place the study of sacred and profane philosophy, also his confession of his religion in divers persecutions, his struggles, and at last his wearing the martyr's crown, Eusebius his nephew, who had such a regard for him as to take from him his surname, has comprehended in detail in one separate book; to this we refer those who may wish to find out accurately concerning him. This Eusebius, indeed, although having prosecuted many studies, especially excels in the study of sacred literature. His life extended until the time of Constantius. Being a man pre-eminently Christian, and endowed with great zeal for Christ, he has written the *Præparatio Evangelica* in fifteen books, and in ten more the *Demonstratio Evangelica*. He was also the first one to take in hand this subject, having been the first to call his book an *Ecclesiastical History*; this work is contained in ten volumes. There is also another book of his extant which he entitled *Canons*, in which he accurately investigates chronological matters. He has also composed five

books *On the Life of Constantine*, and another addressed to him which he calls τριακονταετήρικον. To Stephanus he also dedicates another concerning those things in the sacred Gospels which have been called in question; and he has also left behind divers other works which are of great benefit to the Church. Apart from being such a man as this, he in many ways seems to uphold the opinions of Arius," etc.

From the ms. Acts of Pope Silvester.

"Eusebius Pamphili, in writing his *Ecclesiastical History*, has in every case omitted to mention those things which he has pointed out in other works; for he has put into eleven books the sufferings of the martyrs, bishops, and confessors, who have suffered in almost all the provinces. But indeed as to the sufferings of women and maidens, such as with manly fortitude suffered for the sake of Christ the Lord, he records nothing. He is, moreover, the only one who has set forth in their order the sufferings of the bishops, from the Apostle Peter down. Moreover, he drew up for the benefit of the public a catalogue of the pontiffs of those cities and apostolic seats; that is, of the great city of Rome, and the cities of Alexandria and Antioch. Of the number then of those of whom, up to his own times, the above-mentioned author wrote in the Greek tongue, this man's life he was unable to paraphrase; that is, the life of the saint Silvester," etc.

An ancient author in the Passion of the Holy Valerian.

"The glorious struggles of the most blessed martyrs, for the honor of Christ the Lord and of our God, are celebrated by perpetual services and an annual solemnity, that while our faithful people know the faith of the martyrs, they may also rejoice in their triumphs, and may rest assured that it is by the protection of these that they themselves are to be protected. For it is held in repute that Eusebius the historian, of sacred memory, bishop of the city of Cæsarea, a most blessed priest of excellent life, very learned also in ecclesiastical matters, and to be venerated for his extraordinary carefulness, set forth for every city, in so far as the truth was able to be ascertained, the Holy Spirit announcing the deeds that had been done,—inasmuch as the cities of single provinces and localities or towns have merited being made famous by the heavenly triumphs of martyrs,—set forth, I say, in the time of what rulers the innumerable persecutions were inflicted at the command of officials. Who, although he has not described

entire the sufferings of individual martyrs, yet has truly intimated why they ought to be described or celebrated by faithful and devoted Christians. Thus this faithful husbandman has cultivated the grace of God, which has been scattered abroad in all the earth, while, as it were, from a single grain of wheat, plenteous harvests are produced on account of the fertility of the field, and go on in multiplied abundance. So through the narration of the above-mentioned man, diffused from the fountain of a single book, with the ever-spreading writings of the faithful, the celebrating of the sufferings of the martyrs has watered all the earth."

Usuardus in his Martyrology.

"On the twenty-first day of June, in Palestine, the holy Eusebius, bishop and confessor, a man of most excellent genius, and a historiographer."

Notker in his Martyrology.

"On the twenty-first day of June, the deposition in Cæsarea of the holy bishop Eusebius."

Manecharius in his Epistle to Ceraunius, Bishop of Paris.

"Unceasing in thy continual efforts to equal in merit the very excellent persons of the most blessed bishops in all the conversation of the priesthood, zealous to adorn thyself every day with holy religion, by thy zeal for reading thou hast searched through the whole of the doctrines of the sacred Scriptures. Now as an addition to thy praiseworthiness thou dost faithfully purpose, in the city of Paris, to gather together for the love of religion, the deeds of the holy martyrs. Wherefore thou art worthy of being compared in zeal with Eusebius of Cæsarea, and art worthy of being remembered perpetually with an equal share of glory."

From an old Manuscript Breviary of the Lemovicensian Church. "Of the holy Eusebius, bishop and confessor.

"Lesson 1. Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, on account of his friendship with Pamphilus the martyr, took from him the surname of Pamphili; inasmuch as along with this same Pamphilus he was a most diligent investigator of sacred literature. The man indeed is very worthy of being remembered in these times, both for his skill in many things, and for his wonderful genius, and by both Gentiles and Christians he was held

distinguished and most noble among philosophers. This man, after having for a time labored in behalf of the Arian heresy, coming to the council of Nicæa, inspired by the Holy Spirit, followed the decision of the Fathers, and thereafter up to the time of his death lived in a most holy manner in the orthodox faith.

"Lesson 2. He was, moreover, very zealous in the study of the sacred Scriptures, and along with Pamphilus the martyr was a most diligent investigator of sacred literature. At the same time he has written many things, but especially the following books: The *Præparatio Evangelica*, the *Ecclesiastical History*, *Against Porphyry*, a very bitter enemy of the Christians; he has also composed *Six Apologies in Behalf of Origen*, a *Life of Pamphilus the Martyr*, from whom on account of friendship he took his surname, in three books; likewise very learned *Commentaries on the hundred and fifty Psalms*.

"Lesson 3. Moreover, as we read, after having ascertained the sufferings of many holy martyrs in all the provinces, and the lives of confessors and virgins, he has written concerning these saints twenty books; while on account of these books therefore, and especially on account of his *Præparatio Evangelica*, he was held most distinguished among the Gentiles, because of his love of truth he contemned the ancestral worship of the gods. He has written also a *Chronicle*, extending from the first year of Abraham up to the year 300 A.D., which the divine Hieronymus has continued. Finally this Eusebius, after the conversion of Constantine the Great, was united to him by strong friendship as long as he lived."

In the Breviary of the same church, June twenty-first.

"Omnipotent, eternal God, who dost permit us to take part in the festivities in honor of Eusebius, thy holy confessor and priest, bring us, we pray thee, through his prayers, into the society of heavenly joys, through our Lord Jesus Christ," etc.

From the book On the Lights of the Church.

"Eusebius of Cæsarea, the key of the Scriptures and custodian of the New Testament, is proved by the Greeks to be greater than many in his treatises. There are three celebrated works of his which truly testify to this: the *Canons of the Four Gospels*, which set forth and defend the New

Testament, ten books of *Ecclesiastical History*, and the *Chronicon*, that is, a chronological summary. We have never found any one who has been able to follow in all his foot-prints."

From the Miscellanies of Theodore Metochita (chap. 19)

"Eusebius Pamphili was also a Palestinian by birth, but as he himself says, he sojourned for quite a long time in Egypt. He was a very learned man, and it is evident indeed that he published many books, and that he used language thus."

Testimonies of the Ancients Against Eusebius.

From the Epistle of Arius to Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia (in Theodoret's *Eccles. Hist.* I. 5).

"Eusebius, your brother bishop of Cæsarea, Theodotius, Paulinus, Athanasius, Gregory, Ætius, and all the bishops of the East, have been condemned because they say that God had an existence prior to that of his Son."

From the Book of Marcellus of Ancyra against the Arians.

"Having happened upon a letter of Narcissus, bishop of Neronias, which he wrote to one Chrestus and to Euphronius and to Eusebius, in which it seems that Hosius, the bishop, had asked him whether or not like Eusebius of Palestine he believed in the existence of two essences, I read in the writing that he answered that he believed in the existence of three essences."

From the Synodical Epistle of the Bishops of Egypt, met in the City of Alexandria, to All the Bishops of the Catholic Church (which Athanasius gives in his second apology against the Arians).

"For what sort of a council of bishops was that? What sort of an assembly having truth for its aim? Who out of the great majority of them was not our enemy? Did not the followers of Eusebius rise up against us on account of the Arian madness? Did not they bring forward the others who held the same opinions as themselves? Were we not continually writing against them as against those who held the opinions of Arius? Was not Eusebius of Cæsarea in Palestine accused by our confessors of sacrificing?"

Epiphanius in the Heresy of the Meletians (*Hær*. LXVIII.).

"The emperor upon hearing these things becomes very angry and orders that a synod be convoked in Phœnicia in the city of Tyre; he also gave orders that Eusebius and some others should act as judges; these persons moreover had leaned somewhat too far toward the vulgarity of the Arians. There were also summoned the bishops of the Catholic Church in

Egypt, also certain men subject to Athanasius, who were likewise great and who kept their lives transparent before God, among whom was the great Potamo of blessed memory, bishop and confessor of Heraclea. But there were also present Meletians, the chief accusers of Athanasius. Being zealous for truth and for orthodoxy, the above-mentioned Potamo of blessed memory, a free-spoken man, who regarded the person of no man—for he had been deprived of an eye in the persecution for the truth—seeing Eusebius sitting down and acting as judge, and Athanasius standing up, overcome by grief and weeping, as is the wont with true men, he addressed Eusebius in a loud voice, saying, 'Dost thou sit down, Eusebius, and is Athanasius, an innocent man, judged by thee? Who could bear such things? Do thou tell me, wert thou not in confinement with me at the time of the persecution? I have parted with an eye for the sake of the truth, but thou neither seemest to be maimed at all in body, nor hast thou suffered martyrdom, but art alive, and in no part mutilated. How didst thou escape from the confinement unless that thou didst promise those who have inflicted upon us the violence of persecution to perform the ungodly act, or didst actually perform it?'"

From the Epistle of the Catholic Bishops of Egypt to the Synod of Tyre (which Athanasius gives in the above-mentioned Apology).

"For ye also know, as we have said before, that they are our enemies, and ye know why Eusebius of Cæsarea has become our enemy since last year."

Athanasius in his Epistle on the Decrees of the Council of Nicæa.

"The strange thing is that Eusebius of Cæsarea in Palestine, who had denied on one day, but on the next day had subscribed, sent to his church, saying that this is the faith of the Church, and that this is the tradition of the Fathers. He plainly showed to all that before they had been in error, and had been vainly striving after the truth; for although he was then ashamed to write in just these terms, and excused himself to the Church as he himself wished, yet he plainly wishes to imply this in his Epistle, by his not denying the 'Homoöusion,' 'one in substance,' and 'of the substance.' He got into serious difficulty, for in defending himself, he went on to accuse the Arians, because, having written that 'the Son did not exist before that he was begotten,' they thereby denied that he existed before his birth in the flesh."

The same, in his Treatise on the Synods of Ariminum and Seleucia.

"Most of all, what would Acacius say to Eusebius his own teacher? who not only signed in the synod at Nicæa, but also made it known by letter to the people under him that that was the true faith, which had been agreed upon at the council of Nicæa; for although he defended himself as he pleased through the letter, yet he did not deny the grounds taken. But he also accused the Arians, since, in saying that 'the Son did not exist before that he was begotten,' they also deny that he existed before Mary."

The same, in his Epistle to the Bishops of Africa.

"This also was known all the while to Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, who, at first identifying himself with the Arian heresy, and having afterwards signed at the self-same synod of Nicæa, wrote to his own particular friends, firmly maintaining that, 'We have known of certain learned and renowned bishops and writers among the ancients who have used the term ὁμοούσιος in reference to the divinity of the Father and Son.'"

The same, in his Treatise on the Synods of Ariminum and Seleucia.

"Eusebius of Cæsarea in Palestine, writing to Euphration the bishop, did not fear to say openly that Christ is not true God."

Jerome, in his Epistle to Ctesiphon against the Pelagians.

"He did this in the name of the holy martyr Pamphilus, that he might designate with the name of the martyr Pamphilus the first of the six books in defense of Origen which were written by Eusebius of Cæsarea, whom every one knows to have been an Arian."

The same, in his Second Book against Rufinus.

"As soon as he leaves the harbor he runs his ship aground. For, quoting from the *Apology* of Pamphilus the Martyr (which we have proved to be the work of Eusebius, prince of Arians)," etc.

The same, in his First Book against Rufinus.

"Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, of whom I have made mention above, in the sixth book of his *Apology* in behalf of Origen, lays this same charge against Methodius the bishop and martyr, which you lay against me in my praises [of him]; he says: 'How did Methodius dare to write against Origen

after having said this and that concerning his opinions?' This is no place to speak in behalf of a martyr, for not all things ought to be discussed in all places. Now let it suffice to have barely touched upon the matter, that this same thing was charged against a most renowned and most eloquent martyr by an Arian, which you as a friend praise in me, and, being offended, censure me for."

The same, in his Epistle to Minervius and Alexander.

"I both in manhood and in extreme old age am of the same opinion, that Origen and Eusebius of Cæsarea were indeed very learned men, but went astray in the truth of their opinions."

Socrates, in the First Book of his Ecclesiastical History (chap. 23).

"Eusebius Pamphilus says that immediately after the Synod Egypt became agitated by intestine divisions; but as he does not assign the reason for this, some have accused him of disingenuousness, and have even attributed his failure to specify the causes of these dissensions to a determination on his part not to give his sanction to the proceedings at Nice."

Again, in the same chapter.

"Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, accuses Eusebius Pamphilus of perverting the Nicene Creed; but Eusebius denies that he violates that exposition of the faith, and recriminates, saying that Eustathius was a defender of the opinion of Sabellius. In consequence of these misunderstandings, each of them wrote volumes as if contending against adversaries; and although it was admitted on both sides that the Son of God has a distinct person and existence, and all acknowledged that there is one God in a Trinity of Persons; yet, from what cause I am unable to divine, they could not agree among themselves, and therefore were never at peace."

Theodoritus, in his Interpretation of the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, speaking of the Arians, writes as follows:

"If not even this is sufficient to persuade them, it at least behooves them to believe Eusebius of Palestine, whom they call the chief advocate of their own doctrines."

Nicetas, in his Thesaurus of the Orthodox Faith, Book V. Chap. 7.

"Moreover, Theodore of Mopsuestia relates that there were only nine persons out of all whom the decrees of the Synod did not please, and that their names are as follows: Theognis of Nicæa, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Patrophilus of Scythopolis, Eusebius of Cæsarea in Palestine, Narcissus of Neronias in Cilicia, which is now called Irenopolis, Paulinus of Tyre, Menophantus of Ephesus, Secundus of Ptolemaïs, which borders upon Egypt, and Theonas of Marmarica."

Antipater, Bishop of Bostra, in his First Book against Eusebius' Apology for Origen.

"I deny that the man has yet arrived at an accurate knowledge of the doctrines; wherefore he ought to be given place to so far as regards his great learning, but as regards his knowledge of doctrine he ought not. But, moreover, we know him to have been altogether lacking in such accurate knowledge."

And a little farther on.

"So now, that we may not seem to be trampling upon the man—concerning whom it is not our purpose for the present to speak—examining into the accuracy of his *Apology*, we may go on to show that both were heretics, both he who composed the *Apology*, and he in whose behalf it was composed."

And farther on.

"For as to your attempting to show that others as well as he [Origen] have spoken of the subordination of the Son to the Father, we may not at first wonder at it, for such is your opinion and that of your followers; wherefore we say nothing concerning this matter for the present, since it was long ago submitted and condemned at the general Council."

From the Acts of the Seventh Œcumenical Council.

"For who of the faithful ones in the Church, and who of those who have obtained a knowledge of true doctrine, does not know that Eusebius Pamphili has given himself over to false ways of thinking, and has become of the same opinion and of the same mind with those who follow after the opinions of Arius? In all his historical books he calls the Son and Word of

God a creature, a servant, and to be adored as second in rank. But if any speaking in his defense say that he subscribed in the council, we may admit that that is true; but while with his lips he has respected the truth, in his heart he is far from it, as all his writings and epistles go to show. But if from time to time, on account of circumstances or from different causes, he has become confused or has changed around, sometimes praising those who hold to the doctrines of Arius, and at other times feigning the truth, he shows himself to be, according to James the brother of our Lord, a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways; and let him not think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. For if with the heart he had believed unto righteousness, and with the mouth had confessed the truth unto salvation, he would have asked forgiveness for his writings, at the same time correcting them. But this he has by no means done, for he remained like Æthiops with his skin unchanged. In interpreting the verse 'I said to the Lord, Thou art my Lord,' he has strayed far away from the true sense, for this is what he says: 'By the laws of nature every son's father must be his lord; wherefore God who begat him must be at the same time God, Lord, and Father of the only-begotten Son of God.' So also in his epistle to the holy Alexander, the teacher of the great Athanasius, which begins thus: 'With what anxiety and with what care have I set about writing this letter,' in most open blasphemy he speaks as follows concerning Arius and his followers: 'Thy letter accuses them of saying that the Son was made out of nothing, like all men. But they have produced their own epistle which they wrote to thee, in which they give an account of their faith, and expressly confess that "the God of the law and of the prophets and of the New Testament, before eternal ages begat an only-begotten Son, through whom also he made the ages and the universe; and that he begat him not in appearance, but in truth, and subjected him to his own will, unchangeable and immutable, a perfect creature of God, but not as one of the creatures." If, therefore, the letter received from them tells the truth, they wholly contradict thee, in that they confess that the Son of God who existed before eternal ages, and through whom he made the world, is unchangeable and a perfect creature of God, but not as one of the creatures. But thy epistle accuses them of saying that the Son was made as one of the creatures. They do not say this, but clearly declare that he was not as one of the creatures. See if cause is not immediately given them again to attack and to

misrepresent whatever they please. Again thou findest fault with them for saying that He who is begat him who was not. I wonder if any one is able to say anything else than that. For if He who is is one, it is plain that everything has been made by Him and after Him. But if He who is is not the only one, but there was also a Son existing, how did He who is beget him who was existing? For thus those existing would be two.' These things then Eusebius wrote to the illustrious Alexander; but there are also other epistles of his directed to the same holy man, in which are found various blasphemies in defense of the followers of Arius. So also, in writing to the bishop Euphration, he blasphemes most openly; his letter begins thus: 'I return to my Lord all thanks'; and farther on: 'For we do not say that the Son was with the Father, but that the Father was before the Son. But the Son of God himself, knowing well that he was greater than all, and knowing that he was other than the Father, and less than and subject to Him, very piously teaches this to us also when he says, "The Father who sent me is greater than I."' And farther on: 'Since the Son also is himself God, but not true God.' So then from these writings of his he shows that he holds to the doctrines of Arius and his followers. And with this rebellious heresy of theirs the inventors of that Arian madness hold to one nature in hypostatic union, and affirm that our Lord took upon himself a body without soul, in his scheme of redemption, affirming that the divine nature supplied the purposes and movements of the soul; that, as Gregory the Divine says, they may ascribe suffering to the Deity; and it is evident that those who ascribe suffering to the Deity are Patripassians. Those who share in this heresy do not allow images, as the impious Severus did not, and Peter Cnapheus, and Philoxenus of Hierapolis, and all their followers, the many-headed yet headless hydra. So then Eusebius, who belongs to this faction, as has been shown from his epistles and historical writings, as a Patripassian rejected the image of Christ," etc.

Photius, in his 144th Epistle to Constantine.

"That Eusebius (whether slave or friend of Pamphilus I know not) was carried off by Arianism, his books loudly proclaim. And he, feeling repentance as he pretends, and against his will, confesses to his infirmity; although by his repentance he rather shows that he has not repented. For he cannot show, by means of those writings in which he would seem to be defending himself, that he has withdrawn from his former heretical

doctrines, nor can he show that he agreed with the holy and Œcumenical Synod. But he speaks of it as a marvel that the upholders of the Homoousion should concur with him in sentiment and agree with him in opinion; and this fact both many other things and the epistle written by him to his own people at Cæsarea accurately confirm. But that from the beginning he inwardly cherished the Arian doctrines, and that up to the end of his life he did not cease following them, many know, and it is easy to gather it from many sources; but that he shared also in the infirmity of Origen, namely, the error with regard to the common resurrection of us all, is to most persons unknown. But if thou thyself examine carefully his books, thou shalt see that he was none the less truly overcome by that deadly disease than he was by the Arian madness."

Photius, in his Bibliotheca (chap. 13).

"Of the *Objection and Defense* of Eusebius two books have been read; also other two, which although differing in some respects from the former two, are in other respects the same with regard to both diction and thought. But he presents certain difficulties with regard to our blameless religion as having originated with the Greeks. These he correctly solves, although not in all cases. But as regards his diction, it is by no means either pleasing or brilliant. The man is indeed very learned, although as regards shrewdness of mind and firmness of character, as well as accuracy in doctrine, he is deficient. For also in many places in these books it is plain to be seen that he blasphemes against the Son, calling him a second cause, and general-in-chief, and other terms which have had their origin in the Arian madness. It seems that he flourished in the time of Constantine the Great. He was also an ardent admirer of the excellences of the holy martyr Pamphilus, for which cause some say that he took from him the surname Pamphili."

Photius, in the Same Work (chap. 127).

"There has been read the work of Eusebius Pamphili *In praise of the great emperor Constantine*, consisting of four books. In this is contained the whole life of the man, starting with his very boyhood, also whatever deeds of his belong to ecclesiastical history, until he departed from life at the age of sixty-four. Eusebius is, however, even in this work, like himself in diction, except that his discourse has risen to a somewhat more than usual brilliancy, and that sometimes he has made use of more flowery

expressions than he is wont. However, of pleasantness and beauty of expression there is little, as indeed is the case in his other works. He inserts, moreover, in this work of his in four books very many passages from the whole decalogue of his *Ecclesiastical History*. He says that Constantine the Great himself also was baptized in Nicomedia, he having put off his baptism until then, because he desired to be baptized in the Jordan. Who baptized him he does not clearly show. However, as to the heresy of Arius, he does not definitely state whether he holds that opinion, or whether he has changed; or even whether Arius held correct or incorrect views, although he ought to have made mention of these things, because the synod occupied an important place among the deeds of Constantine the Great, and it again demands a detailed account of them. But he does state that a 'controversy' arose between Arius and Alexander (this is the name he cunningly gives to the heresy), and that the God-fearing prince was very much grieved at this controversy, and strove by epistles and through Hosius, who was then bishop of Cordova, to bring back the dissenting parties into peace and concord, they having laid aside the strife existing between them with regard to such questions; and that when he could not persuade them to do this he convoked a synod from all quarters, and that it dissolved into peace the strife that had arisen. These things, however, are not described accurately or clearly; it would seem then that he is ashamed, as it were, and does not wish to make public the vote cast against Arius in the Synod, and the just retribution of those who were his companions in impiety and who were cast out together with him. Finally, he does not even mention the terrible fate which was inflicted by God upon Arius in the sight of all. None of these things he brings to the light, nor has he drawn up an account of the Synod and the things that were done in it. Whence, also, when about to write a narrative concerning the divine Eustathius, he does not even mention his name, nor what things were threatened and executed against him; but referring these things also to sedition and tumult, he again speaks of the calmness of the bishops, who having been convened in Antioch by the zeal and cooperation of the Emperor, changed the sedition and tumult into peace. Likewise as to what things were maliciously contrived against the ever-conquering Athanasius, when he set about making his history cover these things, he says that Alexandria again was filled with sedition and tumult, and that this was calmed by the coming of the bishops, who

had the imperial aid. But he by no means makes it clear who was the leader of the sedition, what sort of sedition it was, or by what means the strife was settled. He also keeps up almost the same mode of dissimulating in his account of the contentions existing among bishops with respect to doctrines, and their disagreements on other matters."

Joannes Zonaras, in his Third Volume, in which he relates the Deeds of Constantine

"Even Eusebius Pamphili, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, was at that time one of those who upheld the doctrines of Arius. He is said to have afterwards withdrawn from the opinion of Arius, and to have become of like mind with those who hold that the Son is coëqual and of the same nature with the Father, and to have been received into communion by the holy Fathers. Moreover, in the Acts of the first Synod, he is found to have defended the faithful. These things are found thus narrated by some; but he makes them to appear doubtful by certain things which he is seen to have written in his *Ecclesiastical History*. For in many places in the above-mentioned work he seems to be following after Arius. In the very beginning of his book, where he quotes David as saying, 'He spake and they were made, he commanded and they were established,' he says that the Father and Maker is to be considered as maker and universal ruler, governing by a kingly nod, and that the second after him in authority, the divine Word, is subject to the commands of the Father. And farther on he says, that he, as being the power and wisdom of the Father, is entrusted with the second place in the kingdom and rule over all. And again, a little farther on, that there is also a certain essence, living and subsisting before the world, which ministers to the God and Father of the universe for the creation of things that are created. Also Solomon, in the person of the wisdom of God, says, 'The Lord created me in the beginning of his ways,' etc., and farther on he says: And besides all this, as the pre-existent word of God, who also pre-ëxisted before all ages created, he received divine honor from the Father, and is worshipped as God. These and other things show that Eusebius agreed with Arian doctrines, unless some one say that they were written before his conversion."

Suidas, under the word Διόδωρος

"Diodorus, a monk, who was bishop of Tarsus in Cilicia, in the times

of Julian and Valens, wrote divers works, as Theodorus Lector states in his *Ecclesiastical History*. These are as follows: A *Chronicle*, which corrects the error of Eusebius Pamphilus with regard to chronology," etc.

The same Suidas, from Sophronius.

"Eusebius Pamphili, a devotee of the Arian heresy, bishop of Cæsarea in Palestine, a man zealous in the study of the holy Scriptures, and along with Pamphilus the martyr a most careful investigator of sacred literature, has published many books, among which are the following."

Life of the Emperor Constantine

Preface.

In accordance with the instruction of the editor-in-chief the following work consists of a revision of the Bagster translation of Eusebius' "Life of Constantine," Constantine's "Oration to the Saints," and Eusebius' "Oration in Praise of Constantine," with somewhat extended Prolegomena and limited notes, especial attention being given in the Prolegomena to a study of the *Character* of Constantine. In the work of revision care has been taken so far as possible not to destroy the style of the original translator, which though somewhat inflated and verbose, represents perhaps all the better, the corresponding styles of both Eusebius and Constantine, but the number of changes really required has been considerable, and has caused here and there a break in style in the translation, whose chief merit is that it presents in smooth, well-rounded phrase the generalized idea of a sentence. The work on the Prolegomena has been done as thoroughly and originally as circumstances would permit, and has aimed to present material in such way that the general student might get a survey of the man Constantine; and the various problems and discussions of which he is center. It is impossible to return special thanks to all who have given special facilities for work, but the peculiar kindness of various helpers in the *Bibliothèque de la Ville* at Lyons demands at least the recognition of individualized thanksgiving.

E.C.R.
Hartford, Conn.
April 15, 1890.

Chapter I - Life.

§1. *Early Years*

The Emperor Flavius Valerius Constantinus, surnamed the Great, born February 27, 272 or 274, at Naïssus, was son of Constantius Chlorus, afterwards Emperor, and Helena his wife. He was brought up at Drepanum, his mother's home, where he remained until his father became Cæsar (A.D. 292 acc. to Clinton) and divorced Helena (Anon. Vales. p. 471). He was then sent to the court of Diocletian, nominally to be educated (Praxagoras, in Müller, *Fragm.* 4 (1868); Zonar. 13. 1, &c.), but really as hostage, and remained with Diocletian, or Galerius, until the year 306. During this time he took part in various campaigns, including the famous Egyptian expedition of Diocletian in 296 (Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 19; Anon. Metroph., Theoph. p. 10). Shortly after joining the emperor he contracted (296 or 297) his alliance with Minervina, by whom he had a son, Crispus. He was at Nicomedia when Diocletian's palace was struck by lightning (Const. *Orat.* 35), and was present at the abdication of Diocletian and Maximinus in 305 (Lact. *De M. P.* c. 18 sq.). This last event proved a crisis for Constantine. He had grown to be a man of fine physique (Lact. c. 18; Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 19), of proved courage and military skill (cf. remarks on physical characteristics under *Character*), and a general favorite (Lact. l.c.). He had already "long before" (Lact. c. 18) been created Tribune of the first order. It was both natural and fitting that at this time he should become Cæsar in the place of his father, who became Augustus. Every one supposed he would be chosen (c. 19), and Diocletian urged it (c. 18), but the princely youth was too able and illustrious to please Galerius, and Constantine was set aside for obscure and incompetent men (cf. Lact.). His position was far from easy before. His brilliant parts naturally aroused the jealousy and suspicions of the emperors. They, or at least Galerius, even sought his death, it is said, by tempting him to fight wild beasts (a lion, Praxag. p. 3; cf. Zonaras 2, p. 623), or exposing him to special danger in battle (cf. Philistog. 1. 6; Lact. c. 24; Anon. Vales. p. 471; Theophanes p. 10–12, &c.). The situation, hard enough before, now became, we may well

believe, intolerable. He was humiliated, handicapped, and even in danger of his life. He was practically a prisoner. The problem was, how to get away. Several times Constantius asked that his son might be allowed to join him, but in vain (Lact. c. 24; Anon. Vales. p. 471). Finally, however, Constantine gained a grudging permission to go. It was given at night, and the emperor intended to take it back in the morning (Lact. c. 24). But in the morning it was too late. Constantine had left at once to join his father. He lost no time either in starting or making the journey. Each relay of post horses which he left was maimed to baffle pursuit (Anon. Vales., Vict. *Epit.* p. 49; cf. Lact. c. 24, Praxag. p. 3). The rage of the emperor when he learned of the flight was great but vain. Constantine was already out of reach, and soon joined his father at Bononia (Boulogne, Anon. Vales.; cf. Eumen. *Paneg.* (310), c. 7), just in time to accompany him on his final expeditions to Britain (Eumen. *Paneg.* (310) c. 7; cf. Anon. Vales. l.c.). Constantius died shortly after at York (Anon. Vales. p. 471; Eutrop. 10. 1), having named Constantine as his successor (Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 21; Eumen. *Paneg.* (310) c. 7.; Lact. c. 24).

§2. *The First Five Years of Reign.*

The will of the father was promptly ratified by the soldiers, who at once proclaimed Constantine Augustus. Supported by them, and also by Erocus, king of the Allemanni (Vict. *Epit.* p. 49–50), he sent his portrait to Galerius, claiming the title of Augustus. This the emperor refused to grant, but, much against his will, allowed him to have the title of Cæsar (Lact. c. 25). Constantine did not insist on his right to the greater title, but waited his time, and in the interim contented himself with the lesser—as the coins show. There was enough to do. After his father's death he waged war against the Francs, and later against the Bructeri and others (Eutrop. 10. 3; *Paneg.* (307) c. 4; Eumen. *Paneg.* (310) cc. 10–12; Nazar. *Paneg.* (321) 18; Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 25, &c.; cf. Inscr. ap. Clinton 2. 93), and celebrated his victories by exposing his captives to the wild beasts (Eutrop. 10. 3; Eumen. *Paneg.* (310) c. 12; *Paneg.* (313) c. 23; cf. Nazar. *Paneg.* (321) c. 16).

Meanwhile affairs were marching at Rome, too. The same year (306) that Constantine was elected Augustus by the soldiers, Maxentius at Rome was proclaimed emperor by the Pretorian Guards (Eutrop. 10. 2; Vict. *Cæs.* p. 156; Anon. Vales. p. 472; Zos. 2. 9; Socr. 1. 2; Oros. c. 26, &c.; Lact. c.

26). He persuaded the willing (Eutrop. 10. 2) Maximian to resume the imperial purple (Lact. c. 26; Zos. 2. 10), but soon quarreled with him (Socr. 1. 2; Eutrop. 10. 3; Zos. 2. 11; Lact. c. 28). In 307 Constantine and Maximinus were named "sons of the emperors," and the following year were reluctantly acknowledged as emperors by Galerius. Maximian, after he had quarreled with his son, betook himself to Gaul and made alliance with Constantine by giving his daughter Fausta in marriage (307). He proved an uncomfortable relative. The much-abused mother-in-law of fiction is not to be compared with this choice father-in-law of history. First he tried to supersede Constantine by corrupting his soldiers. At his persuasion Constantine had left behind the bulk of his army while he made a campaign on the frontier. As soon as he was supposably out of the way, the soldiers were won by largesses, and Maximian assumed the purple again. But he had reckoned without his host. Constantine acted with decisive promptness, returned by such rapid marches that he caught Maximian entirely unprepared (Lact. c. 29) and drove him into Marseilles, where the latter cursed him vigorously from the walls (Lact. c. 29), but was able to offer no more tangible resistance. The gates were thrown open (Lact. c. 29), and Maximian was in the power of Constantine, who this time spared his precious father-in-law. Grateful for this mildness, Maximian then plotted to murder him. The plan was for Fausta to leave her husband's door open and for Maximian to enter and kill Constantine with his own hands. Fausta pretended to agree, but told her husband (Zos. 2. 11; Joh. Ant. p. 603; Oros. c. 28), who put a slave in his own place (but apparently did not "put himself in the place of" the slave), had the program been carried out, and catching Maximian in the act, granted him that supreme ancient mercy—the right to choose how he would die (Lact. c. 30)

Though in the midst of wars and plots, and liable at any time to have to run from one end of his province to the other to put down some insurrection, Constantine kept steadily at the work of internal improvement, organizing the interior, fortifying the boundaries, building bridges, restoring cities, building up educational institutions, &c. At the end of five years' reign (July 24, 311) he had reduced the turbulent tribes, organized his affairs, and endeared himself to his people, especially to the Christians, whom he had favored from the first (Lact. c. 24), and who

could hardly fail in those days of persecution to rejoice in a policy such as is indicated in his letter to Maximinus Daza in behalf of persecuted Christians (Lact, c. 37).

§3. *State of Affairs in 311.*

In the meantime, while the extreme west of the empire was enjoying the mild rule of Constantine, the other corners of the now quadrangular and now hexagonal world, over which during this time Maximinus, Galerius, Licinius, Maximian, and Maxentius had tried to reign, had had a much less comfortable time. Every emperor wanted a corner to himself, and, having his corner, wanted that of some one else or feared that some one else wanted his. In order clearly to understand Constantine, a glimpse of the state of affairs in these other parts of the empire, together with some idea of the kind of men with whom he had to deal is essential, and may be gotten from a brief view of (1) The rulers, (2) Characters of the rulers, (3) Condition of the ruled.

I. The Rulers.

The intricate process of evolution and devolution of emperors, mysterious to the uninitiated as a Chinese puzzle, is briefly as follows: In 305 Diocletian and Maximian had abdicated (Lact. c. 18; Eutrop. 9. 27; Vict. *Cæs.*), Galerius and Constantius succeeding as Augusti and Severus, Maximinus Daza succeeding them as Cæsars (Lact. c. 19). In 306 Constantius died, Constantine was proclaimed Augustus by his army, Maxentius by the Pretorian Guards (cf. above), and Severus by Galerius (Lact. c. 25), while Maximian resumed the purple (see above)—four emperors, Galerius, Severus, Maximian, and Maxentius, with two Cæsars, Constantine and Maximinus, one with a pretty definite claim to the purple, and the other bound not to be left out in the cold. In 307 Licinius was appointed Augustus by Galerius (Lact. c. 29; Vict. *Cæs.;* Zos. 2. 11; Anon. Vales.; Eutrop. 10. 4), who also threw a sop to Cerberus by naming Constantine and Maximin "sons of emperors" (Lact. c. 32; Coins in Eckhel 8 (1838) 52. 3). Constantine was given title of Augustus by Maximianus (?), and Maximinus about this time was forced, as he said, by his army to assume the title. Meantime the growing procession of emperors was reduced by one. Severus, sent against Maxentius, was deserted by his soldiers, captured, and slain in 307 (Lact. c. 26; Zos. 2. 10; Anon. Vales.;

Eutrop. 10. 2; Vict. *Cæs.* &c. &c.), leaving still six emperors or claimants—Galerius, Licinius, Maxentius, Maximian, Maximinus, and Constantine. In 308, making the best of a bad matter, Galerius appointed Constantine and Maximin Augusti (see above), leaving the situation unchanged, and so it remained until the death of Maximian in 310 (see above), and of Galerius in May, 311 (Lact. c. 33; Vict. *Cæs.,* Vict. *Epit.*; Zos. 2. 11) reduced the number to four.

II. Characters of the Rulers.

Constantine's own character has been hinted at and will be studied later. Severus was the least significant of the others, having a brief reign and being little mentioned by historians. Diocletian's characterization of him was, according to Lactantius (c. 18), as ejaculated to Galerius, "That dancing, carousing drunkard who turns night into day and day into night." The average character of the other emperors was that of the prisoners for life in our modern state prisons. Galerius, "that pernicious wild beast" (Lact. c. 25), was uneducated, drunken (Anon. Vales. p. 472); fond of boasting himself to be the illegitimate son of a dragon (Lact. 9; Vict. *Epit.* p. 49), and sanguinary and ferocious to an extraordinary degree (Lact. c. 9. 21, 22, &c.). Licinius, characterized by "ingratitude" and "cold-blooded ferocity," was "not only totally indifferent to human life and suffering, and regardless of any principle of law or justice which might interfere with the gratification of his passions, but he was systematically treacherous and cruel, possessed of not one redeeming quality save physical courage and military skill" (Ramsay, in Smith *Dict.* 2, p. 784; compare Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 8; *V. C.* 1. 49–56), and "in avaricious cupidity worst of all" (Vict. *Epit.* p. 51). Maximinus' character "stands forth as pre-eminent for brutal licentiousness and ferocious cruelty—lust hard by hate" (Plumptre, in Smith & W. 3, p. 872), and according to Lactantius, c. 38, "that which distinguished his character and in which he transcended all former emperors was his desire of debauching women." He was cruel, superstitious, gluttonous, rapacious, and "so addicted to intoxication that in his drunken frolics he was frequently deranged and deprived of his reason like a madman" (Euseb. *H. E.* 8. 14). Maximianus has been thought to be on the whole the least outrageous, and his somewhat defective moral sense respecting treachery and murder has been noted (cf. above). He has been described as "thoroughly unprincipled…base and

cruel" (Ramsay, in Smith *Dict.* 2, p. 981). He is described by Victor, (*Epit.* p. 48) as "ferus natura, ardens libidine," being addicted to extraordinary and unnatural lust (Lact. c. 8). Truly a choice "best" in this rogues' gallery. Of Maxentius it is said (Tyrwhitt, in Smith & W. 3, p. 865): "His wickedness seems to have transcended description, and to have been absolutely unredeemed by any saving feature." He "left no impurity or licentiousness untouched" (Euseb. *H. E.* 8. 14; cf. Eutrop. 10. 4; Lact. 9). He was marked by "impiety," "cruelty," "lust," and tyranny (*Paneg.* [313] c. 4). He was the most disreputable of all—unmitigatedly disreputable. With all due allowance for the prejudice of Christian historians, from whom such strong statements are mainly drawn, yet enough of the details are confirmed by Victor, *Epit.,* the Panegyrists, Eutropius, and other non-Christian writers to verify the substantial facts of the ferocity, drunkenness, lust, covetousness, and oppression of this precious galaxy of rulers.

III. Condition of the Ruled.

Under such rulers there was a reign of terror during this period which contrasted strangely with the state of things under Constantine. Galerius was "driving the empire wild with his taxations" (cf. Lact. c. 23 and 26), affording in this also a marked contrast with the course of Constantine in Gaul. Maxentius led in the unbridled exercise of passion (Euseb. *H. E.* 8. 14; cf. Lact. c. 18), but in this he differed from the others little except in degree (compare Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 55 on Licinius), and according to Lactantius (c. 28) he was surpassed by Maximin. In brief, all did according to their own sweet wills, and the people had to stand it as best they could. The worst was that the oppression did not end with the emperors nor the friends and officials to whom they delegated power to satisfy their desires at the expense of the helpless. Their armies were necessary to them. The soldiers had to be conciliated and exactions made to meet their demands. They followed the examples of their royal leaders in all manner of excesses and oppressions. No property or life or honor was safe.

The persecution of the Christians reached a climax of horror in this period. The beginning of the tenth persecution was, to be sure, a little before this (303), but its main terror was in this time. Galerius and Maximian are said indeed to have persecuted less during this period, and Maxentius not at all; but Galerius was the real author and sanguinary

promoter of the persecution which is ascribed to Diocletian (Lact. c. 11), while Maximian was, in 304, the author of the celebrated "Fourth Edict" which made death the penalty of Christianity, and Maxentius was only better because impartial—he persecuted both Christian and heathen (Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 33–6; *H. E.* 8. 14; Eutrop. 10. 4). The persecution under Maximin was of peculiar atrocity (Euseb. *H. E.* 8. 17; 9. 6, &c.; Lact. c. 26–27), so that the whole of this period in the East, excepting a slight breathing space in 308, was a terror to Christians, and it is said that "these two years were the most prolific of bloodshed of any in the whole history of Roman persecutions" (Marriott, in Smith & W. 2, p. 594). It was not until the very end of this period that Galerius, in terror of death, issued the famous first edict of toleration. Such was the condition of things in July, 311. The deaths of Severus in 307, Maximian in 310, and Galerius in 311, had cleared the stage so far as to leave but four Augusti, Licinius and Maximin in the East, Constantine and Maxentius in the West. The only well-ordered and contented section of the world was that of Constantine. In all the others there was oppression, excess, and discontent, the state of things at Rome being on the whole the most outrageous.

§4. *Second Five Years.*

This period was most momentous for the world's history. Maxentius, seeking an excuse for war against Constantine, found it in a pretended desire to avenge his father (Zos. 2. 14), and prepared for war. Like his father before him, however, he did not know his man. Constantine's mind was prepared. He was alert and ready to act. He gathered all the forces, German, Gallic, and British (Zos. 2. 15) that he could muster, left a portion for the protection of the Rhine, entered Italy by way of the Alps (*Paneg.*), and marched to meet the much more numerous forces of Maxentius—Romans, Italians, Tuscans, Carthagenians, and Sicilians (Zos. 2. 15). First Sigusium was taken by storm (Naz. *Paneg.* [321] c. 17 and 21; *Paneg.* [313] c. 5); then the cavalry of Maxentius was defeated at Turin (Naz. *Paneg.* [321] c. 22; *Paneg.* [313] c. 6). After a few days' rest in Milan (*Paneg.* [313] c. 7) he continued his triumphant march, defeating the enemy again in a cavalry engagement at Brescia (Naz. *Paneg.* c. 25), and taking the strongly fortified Verona after a hard-fought battle before the walls (Anon. Vales. p. 473; *Paneg.* [313]; Naz. *Paneg.* c. 25–26). This had taken him out of his way a little; but now there were no enemies in the rear, and he was free to push

on to Rome, on his way whither, if not earlier, he had his famous vision of the cross. He reached the Tiber October 26. Maxentius, tempted by a dubious oracle issued from Rome, crossed the Tiber, and joined battle. His apparently unwise action in staking so much on a pitched battle has its explanation, if we could believe Zosimus (2. 15), Eusebius (*V. C.* 1. 38), Praxagoras, and others. His object was, it is said, by a feigned retreat to tempt Constantine across the bridge of boats which he had built in such a way that it could be broken, and the enemy let into the river. If it was a trick, he at least fell into his own pit. The dissipated soldiers of Maxentius gave way before the hardy followers of Constantine, fired by his own energy and the sight of the cross. The defeat was a rout. The bridge broke. Maxentius, caught in the jam, was cast headlong into the river (Anon. Val. p. 473; Lact. c. 44; Chron. Pasch. p. 521, &c.); and after a vain attempt to climb out on the steep bank opposite (*Paneg.* [313] c. 17), was swept away by the stream. The next day his body was found, the head cut off (Praxag.; Anon. Vales. p. 473), and carried into the city (Anon. Vales. p. 473) on the point of a spear (*Paneg.* [313] c. 18; Zos. 2. 17; Praxag. p. 1). Constantine entered the city in triumph amid rejoicings of the people, exacted penalties from a few of those most intimate with Maxentius (Zos. 2. 17), disbanded the Prætorian Guards (Vict. *Cæs.* p. 159; Zos. 2. 17), raised a statue to himself, and did many other things which are recorded; and if he did as many things which are not recorded as there are recorded things which he did not do, he must have been very busy in the short time he remained there.

Constantine was now sole emperor in the West, and the emperors were reduced to three. History was making fast. After a very brief stay in Rome he returned to Milan (Lact. c. 45), where Licinius met him (Anon. Vales. p. 473; Lact. c. 25; Vict. *Epit.* p. 50; Zos. 2. 17, &c.). It had become of mutual advantage to these emperors to join alliance. So a betrothal had been made, and now the marriage of Licinius to the sister of Constantine was celebrated (cf. refs. above Lact.; Vict.; Zos.; Anon. Vales.). At the same time the famous Second Edict or Edict of Milan was drawn up by the two emperors (Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 5; Lact. c. 48), and probably proclaimed. Constantine then returned to Gaul (Anon. Vales. p. 473; Zos. 11. 17), where he was forced into another sort of strenuous warfare—the ecclesiastical, taking a hand somewhat against his will in trying to settle the

famous Donatist schism.

Licinius had a more critical problem to meet. Maximin thought it a good time to strike while Licinius was off in Milan engaged in festivities (Lact. c. 45); but the latter, hastily gathering his troops and pushing on by forced marches, met near Heraclea and utterly defeated him (Lact. c. 46). Maximin fled precipitately, escaping the sword only to die a more terrible death that same summer (Lact. c. 49; Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 58; cf. Zos. 2. 17). The death of Maximin cleared the field still farther. Through progressive subtractions the number of emperors had been reduced to two—one in the East and one in the West.

They, too, promptly fell out. The next year they were at war. Causes and pretexts were various; but the pretext, if not the cause, was in general that Licinius proved an accomplice after the fact, at least, to a plot against Constantine. Whatever the immediate cause, it was one of the inevitabilities of fate. Another vigorous campaign followed, characterized by the same decisive action and personal courage on the part of Constantine which he had already shown, and which supplied his lack of soldiers. First at Cibalis in Pannonia (Oct. 8), then in a desperate battle at Mardia, Licinius was defeated and forced to make peace (Anon. Vales. p. 474; Zos. 2. 19–20). The world was re-divided between the affectionate brothers-in-law, and Constantine took Illyrium to his other possessions. After this battle and the re-division there was a truce between the emperors for some years, during the early part of which (in 316 or 315) the Decennalia of Constantine were celebrated (Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 48).

§5. *Third Five Years.*

About the time of his decennial celebration, his sons Crispus and Constantine, and Licinius, son of Licinius, were made Cæsars. The peace between the emperors continued during the whole of this period. There was more or less fighting with the frontier tribes, Crispus, e.g., defeating the Franks in 320 (Naz. *Paneg.* c. 3. 17?), but the main interest of the period does not lie in its wars. It was a period of legislation and internal improvement (cf. Laws of 319, 320, 321, collected in Clinton, 1, p. 9; also De Broglie, I. 1, 296–97). Early in the period he was at Milan, where the Donatist matter, which had been dragging along since 311, came up for final settlement (cf. note, above). He was also at one time or another at

Arles and at Rome, but the latter and greater part of the period was spent mainly in Dacia and Pannonia (cf. Laws, as above). The close of his fifteen years was celebrated somewhat prematurely at Rome, in the absence of Constantine, by the oration of Nazarius (cf. Naz. *Paneg.*).

§6. *Fourth Five Years.*

If the third period was relatively quiet the fourth was absolutely stirring. There had undoubtedly been more or less fighting along the Danube frontier during the preceding years, but early in this period there was a most important campaign against the Sarmatians, in which they were defeated and their king taken prisoner. In honor of this victory coins were struck (Eckhel, *Doct. Num. Vet.* 8 (1827) 87). But this was only skirmishing; afterwards came the tug of war. Nine years of peace proved the utmost limit of mutual patience, and Constantine and Licinius came to words, and from words to blows. For a long time Constantine had been vexed at the persecution of the Christians by Licinius (cf. Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 8, 9), persecutions waged perhaps with the express purpose of aggravating him. Licinius, on the other hand, naturally chagrined over the previous loss of territory, knowing of Constantine's indignation over his persecutions, and perhaps suspecting him of further designs, was naturally suspicious when Constantine passed within his boundaries in pursuing the Sarmatians (Anon. Vales. p. 474). Mutual recriminations and aggravations followed. Licinius would not let the Sarmatian coins pass current and had them melted down (Anon. Contin. Dio. Cass., in Müller, *Fragm. Hist*. Gr. 4 [1868] 199). Altogether they soon came to blows. The steps were short, sharp, decisive. Constantine defeated Licinius by land (July 3, 323), and through Crispus, by sea (Soz. 1. 7; Anon. Vales. p. 474–5; Zos. 2. 22–3). After the defeat at Adrianople, Licinius retreated to Byzantium (Zos. 2. 23–5; Vict. *Epit*. p. 50), and then to Chalcedon (Anon. Vales. p. 475, Zos. 2. 25–6). Two months after the first victory (Sept. 18) a final and decisive battle was fought at Chrysopolis (Anon. Vales. p. 475; Socr. 1. 4). Licinius surrendered on condition that his life should be spared (Zos. 2. 28), or rather Constantia secured from her brother the promise that his life should be spared (Anon. Vales. p. 475; Vict. *Epit.* p. 50; Pseudo-Leo, p. 85, &c.). He retired to Nicomedia, residing at Thessalonica (Soz. 1. 7; Pseudo-Leo, &c.), but was put to death the following year. Constantine was now sole emperor. His first act (Soz. 1. 8) was to issue a proclamation in favor of the

Christians (Soz. *l.c.*; *V. C.* 2. 24- , and 48-). This was followed by many other acts in their favor—building of churches, &c. (cf. Euseb. *V. C.,* and notes). From this time on he was much identified with Christian affairs, and the main events are given *in extenso* by Eusebius (see various notes). In 325 (June 19-Aug. 25) the Council of Nicæa was held (cf. Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 6, and notes), and Constantine took an active part in its proceedings. The same year his Vicennalia were celebrated at Nicomedia (Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 1; Hieron.; Cassiod.) and the following year at Rome also (Hieron., Cassiod., Prosper, Idat.), Constantine being present at both celebrations, being thus at Rome in July, and passing during the year as far as Arles, apparently spending some time at Milan (cf. the various laws in Clinton, v. 2, p. 92).

§7. *Fifth Five Years.*

The beginning of this period was the beginning of the series of acts which have taken most from the reputation of Constantine. Sometime in 326, perhaps while at Rome, he ordered the death of his son Crispus. The same year (Hieron. *Chron.*) the Cæsar Licinius, his sister's son, was put to death (Eutrop. 10. 6; Hieron.; Prosper.), and shortly after his wife Fausta died or was put to death. But apart from this shadow, the period was hardly less brilliant, in its way, than preceding ones. It was a time of gigantic and, as some said, extravagant internal improvements. Among various enterprises was the refounding, in 327, of Drepanum, his mother's city, as Helenopolis (Hieron. An. 2343; *Chron. Pasch.* p. 283(?); Socr. *H. E.* 1. 18; Soz. 2. 2; Theoph. p. 41), and greatest of all, the transformation of the insignificant Byzantium into the magnificent Constantinople, which was dedicated in 330 (Idatius; *Chron. Pasch.* p. 285; Hesych. §42; Hieron.; cf. Clinton). It was probably during this period, too, that the work of improvement in Jerusalem was undertaken, and Helena made her famous visit thither (Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 42; Soz. 21; Socr. 1. 17; Ephraem. p. 24; Theoph. 37–8, &c.).

§8. *Sixth Five Years.*

The main event of the last full five-year period of this reign was the Gothic war (Hieron. An. 2347; Idat.; Oros. c. 28; Anon. Vales. p. 476; Eutrop. 10. 7; Vict. *Cæs.* p. 352; cf. Soz. 1. 26), undertaken in behalf of the Sarmatians (Anon. Vales. *l.c.*), carried on by Constantine II., and brought to an end April 20, 332 (cf. Clinton). The following year (333) Constans

was made consul (Idat.; Hieron.; Prosper has 332; cf. Zos. 2. 35; Vict. *Cæs.* p. 161, &c.), and in 334 the remarkable (Anon. Vales.) incorporation of 300,000 Sarmatians into the empire (Anon. Vales. p. 476; Idat.; Hieron.; cf. Ammian. 17. 12, 18; 17. 13; 19. 12; *V. C.* 4. 6). This same year Calocærus revolted in Crete and was defeated (Anon. Vales. p. 476; Vict. *Cæs.* p. 161; Oros. c. 28; Hieron.). The following year (335) Constantine celebrated his tricennalia, and Dalmatius was made Cæsar (Idat.; Hieron. An. 340; Vict. *Cæs.* p. 161; Anon. Vales. p. 476; Chron. Pasch. p. 532; Vict. *Epit.* p. 51; Oros. c. 28), making now four Cæsars and a nondescript (cf. Anon. Vales. p. 476)—Constantine II, Constantius, Constans, Dalmatius, and Hannibalianus, among whom the world was now partitioned.

§9. *Last Years.*

Later in this year, Constantine is known to have been at Jerusalem, where he dedicated a church (*V. C.* 4. 40; Chron. Pasch., but wrong year). It was also the year of the Synods of Tyre (Athanas. *c. Ar.* 1. p. 788; *V. C.* 4. 41; Theod. 1. 28). The same year, or early in the following one, Eusebius pronounced his tricennial oration (see *Special Prolegomena*). In 337 the Great Emperor died at Ancyrona, near Nicomedia, just as he was preparing for an expedition against the Persians, and was buried in the Church of the Apostles, at Constantinople (cf. notes on Eusebius' Life of Constantine).

Chapter II - Character.

§1. *Introduction*

A man's character consists of an inherited personality enlarged, modified, or disfigured by his own repeated voluntary acts. A sufficiently exhaustive survey of such character may be made under the rubrics of: 1. Inherited characteristics. 2. Physical characteristics. 3. Mental characteristics. 4. Moral characteristics. 5. Religious characteristics.

The character of Constantine has been so endlessly treated, with such utter lack of agreement, that it seems hopeless to try to reach any clear results in a study of it. "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?" "How shall I go about it to find what sort of a man Constantine really was?" Certainly nothing can be gained by that method which chooses a few acts or characteristics to which shifting tests of various philosophies are applied. Nor can any haphazard selection and stringing together of traits give what is by its nature a synthesis of them all. Like any other scientific study, the first condition of method is that it be systematic. Then, a character generalization is worth just so much, no more, as the grounds on which it is based. To get a man's character from secondary sources, from other men's generalizations, is a hopelessly will-of-the-wisp effort. Again, another vice of characterization as usually practised is the interpretation of the whole by a part rather than the part by the whole. The individual act is thus made the standard of character. To get at what this personality called Constantine was therefore requires a systematic survey of the primary sources with a view to getting the *ensemble* that the eccentric may be judged by the normal. In such survey the main thing is the body of analyzed and grouped facts. The editor's summary, like any summary, is worth only what the facts are worth. This method, however imperfectly carried out, is at least better than rambling observations of incoherent phenomena; and has therefore been adopted in this attempt to find out what sort of a man this Constantine was; Physically, Mentally, Morally, Spiritually.

§2. *Inherited Characteristics.*

The fact of the inheritance of character, virtues or vices as the case may be, curiously recognized in various nations and ancient philosophies (cf. Ribot. *Heredity,* N.Y. 1875, p. 375–6), and even in the ten commandments, has received the clearer exposition of modern science. In view of it, a scientific study of character considers antecedent generations. Biography rests properly on genealogy. Constantine's father, Constantius Chlorus, was a man of great mildness, self-possession, and philosophic virtue, just, and a Neo-Platonist of the best type, a monotheist and philanthropist (cf. Sinclair, in Smith & W. 1. 661–2). Constantine is said to have inherited his father's strength, courage, personal appearance (Eumen. *Paneg.* c. 4), piety (Pseud.-Leo, p. 83; cf. Const. and Euseb. in *V. C.* 2. 49), and general virtues. The slur of Zosimus on the character of Constantine's mother seems to have been quite gratuitous. Her relation to Constantius was in nowise incompatible with virtue, and the honor afterwards paid her, along with the indisputable good early training of Constantine which was with her, indicate a woman of unusual character. The later enterprise and activity with the honors and responsibilities given her show her to have been of very considerable energy and ability.

§3. *Physical Characteristics.*

A graphic picture of his personal appearance is drawn by Cedrenus (p. 472–3). "Constantinus Magnus was of medium height, broad-shouldered, thick-necked, whence his epithet Bull-necked. His complexion was ruddy, his hair neither thick nor crisp curling, his beard scanty and not growing in many places, his nose slightly hooked, and his eyes like the eyes of a lion. He was joyous of heart and most cheery of countenance." Many points in this description are confirmed by others, some apparently contradicted. Taken in detail, his *Height* was probably above medium. Over against this statement of Cedrenus (p. 472) that he was of middle height is that of the earlier Malalas (13. 1), who, while confirming the ruddiness of complexion, characterizes him as tall, and the explicit testimony of Eusebius, that among those with Diocletian "there was no one comparable with him for height" (*V. C.* 1. 19), and likewise among those present at Nicæa (*V. C.* 3-10). But a "thick-necked" form hardly belongs to the strictly "tall" man, and a thick neck and broad shoulders would hardly belong to a form of "distinguished comeliness," if it were short (Lact. c. 18). It may be supposed therefore that he can be described as above

medium height. Moreover, there would naturally have been more mention of height by Lactantius and Panegyrists if it had been very extraordinary. In respect of *Countenance* he was undoubtedly handsome. The "majestic beauty of his face" mentioned by Theophanes (p. 29; cf. *V. C.* 1. 19; 3. 10) is confirmed by suggestions in the Panegyrists (e.g. Eumen. c. 17; Naz. c. 24), and all general testimony, and not belied by the coins. His *Complexion* was ruddy; "reddish" in the expression of Cedrenus (p. 272), "fiery" in that of Malalas (13.1). His *Hair,* rather thin and straight, scanty *Beard,* and "slightly hooked" *Nose* are shown also by the coins, where the nose varies from a pronounced Roman or ungraceful eagle's beak to a very proportionate, slightly aquiline member. His *Eyes* were lion-like (Cedren.), piercingly bright (Paneg. 313, c. 19; also Eumen.). His *Expression* was bright and joyous (Cedren.), characterized by "noble gravity mingled with hilarity" (Naz. *Paneg.* c. 24), by "serenity" and "cheerfulness" (cf. Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 11). In brief, he seems to have been a type of the sanguine temperament.

Added to his beauty of face was an unquestioned beauty of form. His distinguished comeliness of *Figure* (Lact. c. 18) is a favorite theme with his enthusiastic friend Eusebius, who says, "No one was comparable with him for grace and beauty of person" (cf. Eumen. c. 17; *V. C.* 1. 19; 3. 10), and that his figure was "manly and vigorous" (1. 20). The broad *Shoulders* and thick *Neck* prepare one for the testimony to his great bodily *Strength.* The feats of personal valor in combat with the Sarmatian champions and the wild beasts (cf. above), his personal energy in battle (e.g. before Verona; cf. above), much special testimony (e.g. Eumen. *Paneg.* c. 4) and all the general testimony, show that the superlative language of Eusebius is well grounded, and interpreted with conservative imagination is to be taken as fact. According to him, "he so far surpassed his compeers in personal strength as to be a terror to them" (*V. C.* 1. 19), and in respect of *Vigor* of body was such that at the Council of Nicæa his very bearing showed that he surpassed all present in "invincible strength and vigor"; while at the age of sixty or upwards, "he still possessed a sound and vigorous body, free from all blemish and of more than youthful vivacity; a noble mien and strength equal to any exertion, so that he was able to join in martial exercises, to ride, endure the fatigues of travel, engage in battle," &c. (Vict. 4. 53). In *Bearing* he was "manly" (*V. C.* 1. 20), self-possessed, calm (*V. C.* 3. 11),

dignified ("noble gravity," Naz. c. 24; of. Eumen. &c.), with "majestic dignity of mien" (*V. C.* 3. 10) and serenity (*V. C.* 3. 10). In *Manners* he was "suave" (ἐπιεικής) (*V. C.* 3. 10) and "affable to all" (*V. C.* 3. 13). This singular affability was such, according to Lactantius (c. 18), as to endear him greatly to his soldiers. Over against this, however, must be set the statement of Victor, *Epit*. that he was "a scoffer [*irrisor*] rather than suave [*blandus*]" (Vict. *Epit*. 51). But this seems founded on a false exegesis (cf. above) and withal there is no absolute contradiction. Moreover, all his intercourse with bishops, deputies, soldiers, citizens, barbarians, seems to have generally made a favorable impression, and such success without affability of manner would have been marvelous. In *Dress* his taste, late in life at least, became somewhat gorgeous. If he were reigning toay, the comic papers would undoubtedly represent him, like some other good and great men, with exaggerated red neckties and figured waistcoats. He "always wore a diadem," according to Victor, *Epit.* (p. 51), and according to many (Malal. 13. 7–8; Cedren.; Pseudo-Leo, &c.) "none of the emperors before him" wore the diadem at all. Eusebius' description of his appearance at the Council of Nicæa would do credit to a Washington reporter on wedding-toilets; he was "clothed in raiment which glittered, as it were, with rays of light, reflecting the glowing radiance of a purple robe, and adorned with the brilliant splendor of gold and precious stones" (*V. C.* 3. 10).

§4. *Mental Characteristics.*

According to his biographer-friend, Constantine was even more conspicuous for the excellence of his psychical qualities than his physical (*V. C.* 1. 19). Among these qualities are natural intelligence (*V. C.* 1. 19), sound judgment (*V. C.* 1. 19), well-disciplined power of thought (Theoph. p. 29), and peculiarly, as might be expected from his eye and general energy, penetration (Theoph. p. 29). In respect of *Education,* it is said on the one hand that he "reaped the advantages of a liberal education" (*V. C.* 1. 19), and particularly that he was thoroughly trained in the art of reasoning (*V. C.*); but according to Anonymous Vales. (p. 471), and also Cedrenus (p. 473), his literary education was scanty. If there was early lack, he made up for it afterwards with characteristic energy, for he attained very considerable erudition (of a sort) for an emperor, as is shown in his *Oration.* According to Eutropius he was devoted to liberal studies. According to Lydus he was skilled both in the science of letters and the science of arms;

for "if he had not excelled in both sciences, he would not have been made emperor of the Romans" (Lydus, *de Magist.* 3. 33)—a somewhat subjective ground. Such was his devotion to study that, according to Eusebius (*V. C.* 4. 29), "he sometimes passed sleepless nights in furnishing his mind with divine knowledge." The measure of his thoroughness may be gathered from the fact that his knowledge of Greek even, does not seem to have been very extensive—"with which he was not altogether unacquainted" (*V. C.* 3. 13). His learning, as shown in his orations, is the learning of a man of affairs, and has many elements of crudity and consequent pretentiousness; but he is no worse than many authors—much better than most royal authors.

His learning had at least the excellent quality that it was radiated with reference to expression, as all sound learning must be. According to Eusebius, much of his time was spent in composing discourses, many of which he delivered in public (*V. C.* 4. 29), and he continued to the last to compose discourses and to deliver frequent orations in public.

The description by Eusebius of the character of his orations (*V. C.* 4. 24) seems to forbid any assumption of pure vanity as his motive. It is the most natural thing in the world that an emperor should make speeches, and that he should speak on scholastic or religious themes, and with the use of classical philosophy, mythology, and literature, should be no surprise in the days of President Harrison, Mr. Gladstone, and the Emperor William. There is no doubt he wrote and spoke vigorously and effectively to his soldiers, and on political and judicial matters (witness his laws), and his learned literary production is very fair amateur work, considering. In the *Delivery* of his speeches he seems to have had self-possession and modesty of manner, as e.g. at the Council of Nicæa, where "he looked serenely around on the assembly with a cheerful aspect, and having collected his thoughts in a calm and gentle tone…proceeded to speak" (*V. C.* 3. 11). His *Literary style* was somewhat inflated and verbose, but for this, compare *Special Prolegomena.* His *Patronage of learning* showed his interest in it. Following his father's example and continuing his work, he encouraged the schools in Gaul (cf. above). Hosius and Eusebius were his friends and counselors. He made Lactantius tutor to Crispus (Hieron. Chron.). He had copies of the Scriptures made and distributed (*V. C.* 3. 1). In short, he especially "encouraged the study of letters" (Vict. *Epit.* 51) in every way.

§5. *Moral Characteristics.*

(a) *In relations with events, things, or persons.* First of all, Constantine excelled in *Energy,* that fundamental of all developed character. He was pre-eminent for masculine strength of character (Theoph. p. 29), a man of energy (*vir ingens,* Eutrop. 10. 1). This was manifested at every turn, in his successful military activity under Diocletian, in the decisive acts at the time of leaving him, in the prosecution of campaigns against Maximian, Maxentius, Licinius, in the wholesale way in which he pushed internal improvements, the building of Constantinople, the multiplication of Christian houses of worship, in his studies, in his lawmaking; in short, in everything he touched there was the same teeming, resistless energy of the man. His *Determination* was "bent on effecting whatever he had settled in his mind" (Eutrop. 10. 5). His *Rapidity of action* when he rejoined his father is described by Lactantius as incredible (Lact. c. 24). He showed the same alacrity in his quick return and surprise of Maximian, in his first entry into Italy, and in his campaign against Licinius. This energy and activity rose to positive *Impetuosity,* which led him at Verona, before Rome, and at Cibalis to plunge into the midst of battle, communicating his own resistless, indomitable, alert will to do, to his soldiers. Closely linked with these qualities was that personal *Courage and Valor,* inherited from his father (Paneg. 307, c. 3), mentioned by Eusebius (*V. C.* 1. 11), and explicitly or implicitly by almost every one. This most indubitable of all his qualities was witnessed to even by the scoffing Julian as "inexpressibly" great (*Orat.* p. 13), and mentioned even in the work whose chief aim seems, almost, to detract from Constantine (*Cæs.* p. 23). United with all these characteristics of greatness was a far-reaching *Ambition*. This on the one hand is represented to be an ambition for power and glory. He was "exceedingly ambitious of military glory" (Eutrop. 10. 7); "aspiring to the sovereignty of the whole world" (Eutrop. 10. 5). According to Zosimus, at the time of the appointment of Severus and Maximin, already having his mind set on attaining royalty he was roused to a greater desire by the honor conferred on Severus and Maximin, and this eager desire of power was already well known to many. On the other hand, this ambition is represented to be a burning zeal for righting wrongs; his wars against Maxentius and Licinius real crusades, and his actual objective in all things the reform to be effected. If the fruit proves the motive, this was so; for he consistently used or tried

to use his power for what he thought public good. This he did in Gaul, after his victories, in his legislation, and in his internal improvements.

In view of all this powerfulness of personality, it may be said of all successes of this "man of power" (Eutrop. 10. 5) what Eutropius says of his success in war, that it was great, "but not more than proportioned to his exertions" (Eutrop.). With all this energy of personality, however, he was far from being headstrong. On the contrary, he showed marked *Prudence,* resembling his father in this also (Paneg. 307, c. 3). Sustaining so long the delicate position at the court of Diocletian, all his provision for guarding the frontiers, his long-suffering in waiting to be confirmed Cæsar, in waiting his opportunity to meet Maxentius, in waiting and getting everything in hand before meeting Licinius, his wise moderation in demand on the conquered, and the not pressing forward until he had everything well arranged, show this, and a high degree of *Patience* withal. This latter virtue was peculiarly characteristic whether exercised in respect of things or plans or people, and his great patience in listening to complaints (Naz. c. 24) is only a part of the whole. As he was patient, so he was distinguished for *Perseverance,* and "firm and unshaken" (Theoph. p. 29) *Steadfastness.* So great energy united with these other qualities barely needs testimony to suggest great *Faithfulness* to his tasks in hand, as in that "strict attention to his military duties" which Lactantius says (c. 18) characterized him as a young man. In brief, his whole personality was a marked example of that balance of power and the measuring of remote ends which is included under the word *Self-control,* in the use of the philosophy of which he, as well as his father, was a disciple. In this exercise of his great energy towards himself he was recognized to be remarkable. This self-control was manifested especially in his unusual *Chastity.* As a young man he was marked by correct moral habits (*probis moribus,* Lact. c. 18). The specific testimony of Eusebius to this (*V. C.*) would have comparatively little weight on a point like this, and the same might be said, in a measure, of the testimony of the Panegyrists (Naz. c. 24; 307, c. 4; 313, c. 4), who mention this virtue. But panegyrical art would forbid the laudation of what was conspicuously lacking; rather it would not be mentioned, and the general testimony goes to show at least a contemporary reputation for extraordinary continence, considering his time and environment. His relationship with Minervina hardly touches this

reputation, whether she was wife or only legitimate concubine. The accusations and innuendoes of Julian, *Cæsars,* have, in any fairly critical estimate, hardly more than the weight of some malignant gossip whose backbiting is from his own heart. "Honi soit qui mat y pense." Like Licinius, he seems to have been unable to understand that purity of heart which permitted the free companionship of women in social or religious life. Julian's general charge of luxuriousness and sensuousness (p. 43, 306, 25, 38, 42, &c.) must be regarded largely in the same light; for this delight in soft garments, precious gems, games, and festivities was, if we can judge aright, in no sense "enervating pleasure and voluptuous indulgence"; for he was indefatigable in studies and works of all sorts, although it is perhaps to be referred to the vanity and love of display of which he is accused, and of which more later.

(b) *In relations with people.* In general he was *Amiable*—popular with the soldiers, popular even with his subdued enemies (Eutrop. 10. 7). Diocletian reminded Galerius (Lact. c. 18) that he was "amiable," and he must have been so; for he was "loved by soldiers" (Eumen. c. 16), and so "endeared to the troops" that in the appointment of Cæsar he was "the choice of every individual" (Lact. c. 18). This popularity he indeed "sought by every kind of liberality and obligingness" (Eutr. 10. 7.), but what he sought he found.

A very large element in this popularity was the universal *Mildness, Mercifulness,* and *Forbearance* which he showed. In these is found a class of characteristics which stand alongside his energy of character as peculiarly characteristic and great. "He whose familiar habit it was to save men's lives" (*V. C.* 4. 6), as a young man promised, in the opinion of Diocletian (Lact. c. 18), to be "milder and more merciful than his father." Even in the opinion of Julian he was "far more humane (πραότερον), and in very many other respects superior to others, as I would demonstrate if there were opportunity" (Julian, *Orat.* p. 15); and he again (p. 96) speaks of him in laudatory terms as contrasted with the other emperors. Eusebius, as might be expected, is still stronger in expression, and sets Constantine "in contrast with tyrants who were stained with blood of countless numbers," saying that in Constantine's reign "the sword of justice lay idle," and men were "rather constrained by a paternal authority than governed by the stringent power of the laws" (*V. C.* 3. 1). This mercifulness he manifested

on every occasion. "When Sigusium was on fire," he directed greater effort towards saving it than he had to capturing it (Naz. *Paneg.* c. 21). At the taking of Rome he punished a certain few only of those most intimate with Maxentius (Zos.), and even Zosimus notes the great joy and relief of people at the exchange of Constantine for Maxentius. It is noticeable that in the inscriptions the epithet "clementissimus," most rare of other emperors, is found a considerable number of times of him. So great was this mildness of conduct that he was "generally blamed for his clemency" (*V. C.* 4. 31), on the ground that crimes were not visited with their proper penalties. The testimony to this humaneness of character is almost unlimited and conclusive, but there is more or less evidence which is urged in qualification or contradiction. It is rather a common thing to say that he was at first mild, but later pride of prosperity caused him greatly to depart from this former agreeable mildness of temper (Eutrop.). Then the execution of the various members of his own family (cf. discussion below), the exposure of prisoners to the wild beasts (Eumen. *Paneg.* c. 12), his severe decree against those who should conceal copies of the works of Arius (Socr. 1. 9), his treatment of the Jews (Greg. Niceph., or at least his laws), and the severe penalties of some of his laws are among the points brought against him. But the remark of Eutropius is to be interpreted by the "former agreeable mildness of temper," to which he himself witnesses, and the fact that this latter period was that where the points of view of the two men had widely diverged. The exposure of prisoners to wild beasts was no evidence of cruelty in itself; for under the customs then prevailing it might have been cruelty to his subjects not to have done this, and his treatment of the barbarian enemies is rather to be interpreted in the light of the testimony of Eutropius that he "left on the minds of the barbarians [Goths] a strong remembrance of his kindness" (10. 7). His treatment of his family is discussed elsewhere, but whatever its bearings may be, there is no just historico-psychological ground whatever for the use of the word which is so freely bandied—cruelty. Cruel he was not in any sense. Even the extreme of the Panegyrist who says to him, "you are such by inheritance and destiny that you cannot be cruel" (Eumen. *Paneg.* c. 14), is nearer the truth. The penalties of his laws lay him open in a degree to a charge of growing severity; but it was great, if sometimes mistaken and overzealous, regard for what he deemed the public welfare, and on quite a different

plane from anything which we express as cruelty. Though with the growing conservatism of a man who finds his purposes of mercy continually perverted and his indulgences abused, he yet remained to the end of his life most merciful and mild compared with those who went before and who followed.

This fact becomes more clear in seeing how he excelled in kindred virtues. The *Patience* already mentioned, distinguished forbearance, and undoubted benevolence, or at least generosity, are traits which group with mercy and have no fellowship with cruelty. And these he had. He showed distinguished *Forbearance,* and that oftentimes, as in a disturbance at Antioch, where he "applied with much forbearance the remedy of persuasion" (*V. C.* 3. 59). The outrageous conduct of those who, in the Arian disturbances, dared "even to insult the statues of the emperor…had little power to excite his anger, but rather caused in him sorrow of spirit" (*V. C.* 3. 4), "and he endured with patience men who were exasperated against himself." These words are by Eusebius, to be sure; but his conduct with Donatists, Arians, Maximinianus, and Licinius, in individual and on the whole, show that in fact he did habitually exercise great forbearance. To this was added much activity of positive *Kindness.* On first accession he "visited with much considerate kindness all those provinces" (*V. C.* p. 23). This kindness was shown throughout his reign, and brightly illustrated in his treatment of the persecuted Christians from the beginning—in his acts in Gaul, in his famous toleration edict, in his letter to Maximin, and in his acts throughout. After his victory over Maxentius came the edict that those wrongfully deprived of their estates should be permitted to enjoy them again,…unjustly exiled were recalled and freed from imprisonment (Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 41). After the victory over Licinius he recalled Christian exiles, ordered restitution of property, released from labor in mines, from the solitude of islands, from toil in public works, &c., those who had been oppressed in these ways (*V. C.* p. 70–71). There is strong consensus of testimony to a very lovable habitual exercise of this trait in his "readiness to grant hearing," "patience in listening," and "kindness of response" to those whose complaints he had patiently listened to (Naz. 24). He was most excellent (*commodissimus*) to hear embassies and complaints of provinces (Vict. *Epit.* p. 51)—a testimony which is borne out by the facts. His *Generosity* is equally undoubted. His magnificent gifts and largesses to

the army were still remembered in the time of Julian (*Orat.* p. 13). His constant and lavish giving to the Christians is Eusebius' unending theme; but it was not to the churches alone; for we read of his munificence to heathen tribes (*V. C.* 2. 22), his liberality to the poor (*V. C.* 1. 43) in giving money for clothing, provision for orphans and widows, marriage portions for virgins, compensation to losers in law suits (*V. C.* 4. 4). It was "scarcely possible to be near him without benefit" (*V. C.* 1. 43; cf. *V. C.* 3. 16; 3. 22; 4. 44).

Though slow to serve some friends through suspicion (i.e. *dubius* thus explained), he was "exceedingly generous towards others, neglecting no opportunity to add to their riches and honors" (Eutrop. 10. 7). "With royal magnificence he unlocked all his treasures and distributed his gifts with rich and high-souled liberality" (*V. C.* 3. 1). He seems to have carried it rather to excess, even on the showing of Eusebius. "No one could request a favor of the emperor, and fail of obtaining what he sought.…He devised new dignities, that he might invest a larger number with the tokens of his favor" (*V. C.* 4. 2). It is worth giving the account by Eusebius of this conduct in full here. He says (*V. C.* 4. 54) that this "was a virtue, however, which subjected him to censure from many, in consequence of the baseness of wicked men, who ascribed their own crimes to the emperor's forbearance. In truth, I can myself bear testimony to the grievous evils which prevailed during those times; I mean the violence of rapacious and unprincipled men, who preyed on all classes of society alike, and the scandalous hypocrisy of those who crept into the church.…His own benevolence and goodness of heart, the genuineness of his own faith, and his truthfulness of character induced the emperor to credit the professions of those reputed Christians who craftily preserved the semblance of sincere affection for his person. The confidence he reposed in such men sometimes forced him into conduct *unworthy of himself,* of which envy took advantage to cloud in this respect the luster of his character." There seems, therefore, some ground for the charge of *Prodigality,* that he "wasted public money in many useless buildings, some of which he shortly after destroyed because they were not built to stand" (Zos.), and (Zos. p. 104) "gave great largesses to ill-deserving persons, mistaking profusion for munificence" (τὴν γὰρ ἀσωτίαν ἡγεῖτο φιλοτιμίαν). Zosimus adds that to do this, he "imposed severe taxes on all, so severe that fathers were obliged to prostitute their daughters to raise

the money, that tortures were employed, and in consequence whole villages depopulated." This testimony is, however, by one bitterly prejudiced, who regarded money spent on Christian houses of worship as worse than wasted, and indicates only what appears from Eusebius as well, that expenditures for cities, schools, and churches built, and for other matters, must have been enormous. But so, too, they were enormous under other emperors, and Constantine, at least, instead of spending on debauchery, seems to have had something to show for it. As to taxes, Zosimus would undoubtedly sympathize with the Kentucky moonshiners in their "oppression" by revenue officers, if he were here now and Constantine were President, and would fulminate in the daily papers against the wicked party which by its wicked tariff compels men to marry their daughters to rich husbands in order to get their taxes paid—and incidental luxuries supplied. But that does not say that an exorbitant tariff, to supply "jobs" which shall furnish rich "spoils" for those who have "pulls" out of the pockets of the many, is good; yet this, in modern phrase, is about what Constantine did. Constantine's trust in his friends and generosity to the unworthy, with its consequences on the tax-payers, reminds strikingly of some of our own soldier-presidents, whom we love and admire without approving all their acts. And yet, on the other hand, much of the expenditure was for solid improvement, and could only be criticised by those who now oppose expenditures for navy, for improved postal service, public buildings, subsidies, &c.; though yet, again, his wholesale way of doing things also reminds one of the large generosity of some modern politicians in their race for popularity, with their Pension, Education, River and Harbor, and what not liberalities out of the pockets of the people. But whatever unwisdom may have been mingled, all this profusion shows in him a generosity of character which was at least amiable, and in the main genuine. His generosity took also the form of *Hospitality,* as shown by his entertainings at the Council of Nicæa (*V. C.* 4. 49). With all these qualities of amiable popularity there seems to have been joined a yet more fundamental element, of permanent influence among men, in a spirit of *Justice* so marked that the claim of the Panegyrist is hardly too sweeping when he says that "all who took refuge with him for whatever cause he treated justly and liberally" (Paneg. 307. 5)—if there is added "up to his light and ability." Closely linked with this again is that "Unbending

righteousness" of which Theophanes (p. 29) speaks. And to all these qualities was added that synthesis of qualities—a remarkable *Tact* in his intercourse with men, a trait typically exemplified in his conduct at the Council of Nicæa, where "the emperor gave patient audience to all alike, and reviewed every proposition with steadfast attention, and by occasionally assisting the arguments of each party in turn, he gradually disposed even the most vehement disputants to a reconciliation,…persuading some, convincing others by his reasonings, praising those who spoke well, and urging all to unity of sentiment, until at last he succeeded in bringing them to one mind and judgment respecting every disputed question" (*V. C.* 3. 13).

But success with men and popularity seem to have opened that pitfall of success—*Vanity*—and it is charged that he fell thereinto, although there is testimony to the exact contrary. According to Victor (*Epit.* p. 51) he was "immeasurably greedy of praise." This agrees with, and is at the same time modified by Eutropius' testimony to his ambition for glory and for honorable popularity (10. 7), and his apparently complacent reception of the outrageous flattery of Optatian (cf. his letter), seems at least to show some weakness in this direction. So again his tendency toward *Magnificence,* as shown in his assuming the diadem and his dress in general (cf. above), in the splendor of banquets as witnessed by his approving friend (*V. C.* 3. 15), his desire to do on a large scale whatever he did, whether in the building of cities or splendid houses of worship, or in book-binding ornamentations of pearls and gems. And yet again it is shown in what seems at this distance his *Conceit,* sublime in its unconsciousness in reckoning himself a sort of thirteenth, but, it would seem, a facile princeps apostle, in the disposition for his burial, "anticipating with extraordinary fervor of faith that his body would share their title with the apostles themselves.…He accordingly caused twelve coffins to be set up in this church, like sacred pillars, in honor and memory of the apostolic number, in the centre of which his own was placed, having six of theirs on either side of it" (*V. C.* 4. 60). One can seem to read in this a whole history of unblushing flattery, and it reminds that Eunapius (*Vic. ædes.* p. 41) has spoken of his pleasure in the stimulant of "intoxicating flattery." Still it is not to be supposed that this was a peculiarly weak vanity or an absorbing one. The testimony to his *Modesty* (*V. C.* 3. 10), though by Eusebius, is too circumstantial to be

wholly unreal, and the testimony to his Humility in his "indignation at excessive praise" (*V. C.* 4. 48), and the records of Eusebius that he "was not rendered arrogant by these plaudits nor uplifted by the praises" (Euseb. *V. C.* 1. 39), and of the Chronicon Paschale (p. 521) that "he was not at all puffed up by the acclamations," evidently represent a genuine thing. This mixed character is too frequently met with to be incomprehensible. Real power, recognizing its own success, glad of the recognition of others, not at bottom because of cold vanity, but from warm appreciation of human friendliness, became through success in carrying out what seemed to him, and were, divine plans, fired with the thought that he was the especial and necessary minister of God, that his thoughts and will were directly touched by the Divine Will and thus that whatever he thought or willed was infallible. He is not unlike some modern rulers. The spirit, though one of real vanity, or egotism at least, has an element of nobleness in it, and in most of its manifestations commands respect along with the smile. The accusation of Zosimus of *Arrogance* "when he had attained to the sole authority," and that he "gave himself up to the unrestrained exercise of his power," must be interpreted like those of other un-Christian witnesses, in the light of the fact that his actions worked relative hardships to the non-Christians, and that very justice to the Christians would seem injustice to them, and if Constantine was more than just, his generosity was at some one's expense. His energy of execution and constant success, with his dominating idea of a Divine mission, would naturally engender this faith in his own infallibility; for what is arrogance but this vanity joined with power? His action toward schismatics—Donatists, Arians, or orthodox troublers of his peace—was such as to suggest some degree of this vice. Yet his success in keeping the followers of the old religion fairly mollified, and his generally successful tact, showed that this was in no sense a dominating and unrelieved characteristic. Two other weaknesses closely allied with these are also imputed to Constantine: *Jealousy,* as illustrated by the statement that "wishing to minimize the deeds of his predecessors, he took pains to tarnish their virtues by giving them jocose epithets" (Dion. Cont. 2 [Müller, p. 199]; cf. Vict. *Epit.* p. 51), and *Suspiciousness* (Eutrop. 10. 7); for which latter, a man who had survived as many plots as he had, might well be excused. Again and again and again he trusted men, and they deceived him. His conduct with Maximian shows that at least in the beginning, before he had had so much

experience of untrustworthiness, he was remarkably free from this. A much more serious charge is that of *Faithlessness* preferred by Zosimus, who says (2. 28), "in violation of his oaths (for this was customary with him)" and twice repeats the charge. Eusebius, on the other hand, tells what great pains Constantine took not to be the one to break peace with Licinius (*V. C.*). One is worth as little as the other. The charge seems to rest mainly or wholly on his conduct towards Licinius, in beginning war and in putting him to death. A small boy once held a smaller boy in a firm grip, but agreed to spare him the cuffing he deserved because he was smaller. The smaller small boy promptly set his teeth in the leg of the larger small boy, and was properly cuffed for it. Thereupon the smaller small boy's big brother was filled with indignation, which he manifested by seeking and finding the same fate. The indignation in behalf of Licinius seems to be in large measure big brother indignation—indignation with the wrong party. He appears to have been one of those who held a compact to be binding on the other party only. It wasn't in the bargain that he should persecute the Christians, or in the other bargain that he should plot his benefactor's overthrow. That king in Scripture who took back his promise to forgive a debt of ten thousand talents was not faithless.

The conclusive universal testimony to the general mildness of his character and his habitual mercifulness. In view of this, it is to be judged that there was some real, or appearing, great ground of judicial wrath. 4. That Constantine had suffered from plots on the part of his own relatives over and over again, and spared, and been plotted against again, as in the cases of Maximian, Bassianus, and Licinius. 5. That they were not put to death "in a gust of passion" at once, but in successive acts. In view of these things it is fair and just to say that they were put to death on grounds which seemed just and for the welfare of society, and their deaths in no sense indicate cruelty or unnaturalness on the part of Constantine. Even the death of Licinius must be interpreted by the political ethics of the times and its circumstances. So long as sentimentalists continue to send bouquets to murderers and erect monuments to anarchists, they will regard execution, even legal execution, as *prima facie* evidence of cruelty, and the killing of a murderer in self-defense, or the hanging of a traitor, as crime. Constantine's whole character ensures that if he thought he could have spared them, or any one, with safety, he would have done so.

In general he was a faithful *husband* as respects marital virtue, and a good *father.* He took care that his children should be well educated. Crispus was under Lactantius (Hieron.), and the others perhaps under Arborius ("Auson. de Prof. Burdig. 16"); at all events, he had the most accomplished teachers of secular learning to instruct in the art of war, and in political and legal science (*V. C.* 4. 51), and both by his own instruction and that of men of approved piety, took special pains with their religious training. He early appointed them to offices of authority, and distributed the empire among them.

(c) *In relations with his family.* He was a filial *Son,* having the confidence of his father, as shown in his wish of succession, and showing his mother all honors when he came to power (cf. coins showing her position as empress, and *V.C.*). "And well may his character be styled blessed for his filial piety as well as on other grounds" (*V. C.* 3. 47).

It is in this relation to his family, however, that the most serious attacks on the character of Constantine have been made. Eutropius says: "But the pride of prosperity caused Constantine greatly to depart from his former agreeable mildness of temper. Falling first upon his own relatives, he put to death his son, an excellent man; his sister's son, a youth of amiable disposition; soon afterwards his wife; and subsequently many of his friends." This has been a battle-ground of accusation or excusation in all the centuries. The testimony is very meagre and uncertain, but this much may be said: 1. That any jury would regard the fact of deaths as evidenced. It is witnessed by Eutrop. (10. 6), Zos., Vict., Hieron., &c. 2. That he was unjustifiable is not proven. In respect to the death of Fausta, at least, there was probably just cause; whether love intrigue or other intrigue, there seems to have been some real occasion. The death of Crispus, too, was from no mere suspicions, but on apparently definite grounds of distrust. It is historical assumption to say that he had no good grounds, whatever these may have been—illicit relationship with Fausta or more probably political intrigue. At the worst, he was put to death on false but, at the time, apparently true accusation; what has been done by judges and juries of the best intention. Of Licinius, his sister's son, it can hardly be said that he had the same reason, as he was still a boy. But remembering the inherited character of Licinius, and noticing the curious fact that the cordiality between Constantia and Constantine was peculiarly great to the end, it seems as if

there must have been some mitigating circumstance. In all historical candor it looks as if there had been some general intrigue against Constantine which had been met in this way; but the fairest verdict to enter is "causes unknown."

In estimating the characteristic value of the acts it must be noted, 1. That it has in no sense the character of private execution. The emperor was judge. Even if he mistook evidence and put to death an innocent man, it was as when a judge does the same. 2. That the relative moral character of punishments inflicted is conditioned by the custom of punishment. An English judge of the past was not as cruel in hanging a man for theft, as a modern one in applying the extreme penalty of the law to an offense with mitigating circumstances, would be. 3. That all law of evidence, all rhyme and reason, says that any man's any act is to be interpreted in the light of his *general character.* Where evidence is lacking or doubtful, such evidence of general character has actual weight, and may be conclusive. In application to these acts note (*a*) The peculiar forbearance which Constantine exercised toward Maximian.

(d) *In relations with friends.* His general conduct toward his friends was marked by very great liberality (cf. above). Eutropius speaks emphatically of this even while he uses the expression which has been such a puzzle to all, that "toward some of his friends he was double" (or dangerous), a phrase which is interpreted by Johannes Ant. as meaning "to some of friends false (unsound, ὑπούλως) and unsafe (unwholesome, οὐχ ὑγιῶς)" (ed. Müller 4. p. 602–3). His uniform effort to please his friends has been discussed above.

(e) *In relations with society.* 1. As *General* he seems to have been popular with his own soldiers (cf. above), inspiring them with enthusiasm and energy. Toward hostile soldiers he was merciful (cf. above), not following up an advantage further than was necessary, and toward conquered enemies unusually forbearing; e.g. at Sigusium, at Rome, with Maximian, with Licinius, and with the Goths (cf. above). His generalship is characterized by careful provision for the guarding of his rear, and by rapidity of movement and dash in actual conflict. 2. As *Legislator* he "enacted many laws, some good, but most of them superfluous, and some severe" (Eutrop. 10. 8). He seems to have had a weakness for law-making

which, at all events, shows a characteristic respect for law little shared by his early contemporaries. Of course Eutropius would consider all laws in favor of Christians superfluous. Laws for the abolition of idolatrous practices, for the erection of Christian houses of worship, observance of the Lord's Day (*V. C.* 4. 23), permitting cases to be tried before bishops (Soz. 1. 9; Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 7; Cod. Theod. Tit. de episc. 2) &c., would surely seem so. But even in other laws Constantine seems to have had at times an abnormal zeal for law-making, when his energies were not occupied in war or church-building. The laws were generally wise and, at the least, benevolently or righteously meant. Such were the abolition of crucifixion (Vict. *Cæs.*) and of gladiatorial shows (*V. C.* 4. 25; Socr. 1. 8; C. Theod. 15. 12. 1), the law that the families of slaves were not to be separated (C. Theod. 2.25), that forbidding the scourging of debtors (C. Theod. 7. 3), and that repressing calumny (Vict. *Epit.* 51). Among the "severe" laws were such as punished certain forms of illicit intercourse with death. 3. As *Statesman* his policy was broad and far-reaching. He fully organized and carefully established one section of his territory before he enlarged. He changed the whole constitution of the empire, both civil and military (cf. Wordsworth, in Smith & W.). He inaugurated reforms in finance, and especially was most assiduous in the matter of internal improvements, restoring and building from one end of the empire to the other. The great characteristic consummation of his reign was the union of Church and State, over which men are still divided as to whether it was a tremendous blessing or a tremendous curse. Tremendous it surely was in its shaping power on world history. (Compare numerous titles under *Literature.*) The general statement of Eutropius that "in the beginning of his reign he might have been compared to the best princes, in the latter part only to those of a middling character," must be interpreted by the fact that during the latter part of his reign he was so associated with Christianity, in itself a falling away in the eyes of the old religionists. His reign was one of order and justice such as few were, and an order out of chaos, a reign in which it could be peculiarly said that "chastity was safe and marriage protected" (Naz. c. 38), where a man's life and property were secure as under few of the Roman emperors. It is idle to refuse the title of Great to a man who, from the beginning, followed a consistent, though developing policy, organized the interior, and securely guarded the frontier of his empire at each

enlargement, and finally unified the whole on such a basis as to secure large internal prosperity and development.

§6. *Religious Characteristics.*

Was Constantine a Christian? This vain question has to be considered, hardly discussed. The interminable opinions, one way or the other, are for the most part wise-seeming, meaningless generalizations. Like any generalized statement, it is conditioned by the point of view of the author. When ten men answered the question "What is a Christian?" in ten different ways, who shall say what any one is? This has been the difficulty. One does not conceive of Christianity apart from baptismal regeneration. The question has then narrowed to one of baptism. Constantine was not a Christian until just before his death. Another has some other test. Another is not a Christian himself, and so on. A good Biblical, Protestant starting-point is to say he was a Christian as soon as he believed in Christ, and that the evidence of faith is in confession and action. Already, before his campaign into Italy, he seems to have been in intimate contact with the Christians. Hosius was probably already one of his advisers. The young emperor had inherited his father's piety (Paneg. 307, c. 5), and was inclined to monotheism. The words of advisers must have made him think at least, and he seems to have made a sort of test of believing at the time of the famous "vision of the cross," whatever that may have been. Judging from the way men think and feel their way to faith, it seems psychologically probable that, feeling his way along to that point, he tried faith and, having success, he substantially believed from that time on. Certainly from a very early period after this, the evidences begin to be clear and increasingly so as presumably his faith itself became more clear and fixed. The account in Eusebius of the process of thought by which he inclined toward Christianity has the greatest plausibility. He says that "considering the matter of Divine assistance, it occurred to him that those who had relied on idols had been deceived and destroyed, while his father…had honored the one Supreme God, had found him Saviour, &c.…he judged it folly to join in the idle worship of those who were no gods…and felt it incumbent on him to honor no other than the God of his father." The nature of the vision of the cross, whether a miracle, a natural phenomenon, or only a dream, does not affect the probability of the account by Eusebius of what followed it (*V. C.* 1. 32). "At the time above specified, being struck

with amazement at the extraordinary vision, and resolving to worship no other God save him who had appeared to him, he sent for those who were acquainted with the mysteries of his doctrines, and inquired also what God was.…They affirmed that he was God, the only begotten Son of the one and only God," and he thereupon "made the priests of God his counsellors and deemed it incumbent on him to honor the God who had appeared to him, with all devotion." According to Sozomen, "it is universally admitted Constantine embraced the religion of the Christians previous to his war with Maxentius and prior to his return to Rome and Italy; and this is evidenced by the dates of the laws which he enacted in favor of religion" (Soz. 1. 5; cf. 1. 3). Philostorgius (1. 6), "in conformity with all other writers," ascribes to the victory over Maxentius (Photius. *Epit.*). This is confirmed, too, by the remark of the Panegyrist (313, c. 4; cf. c. 2 and c. 11), that he conducted the war by Divine instruction, and the famous inscription on the triumphal arch, *"instinctu Divinitatis."* According to Augustine he was at the time of the petition of the Donatists, "mindful of the hope which he maintained in Christ" (August. *contra litt. Petil.* Bk. II. c. 92, p. 205).

The tales of his baptism at this time, or by Sylvester at all, are pure fables (cf. under *The Mythical Constantine*), but it appears from antecedent probability, from testimony, and from his early subsequent identification with the Christians that he became fairly convinced at this time. His letters concerning the council at Arles, to be sure, have little direct evidence, but enough to show that he regarded the Christian religion as the worship of that one supreme God, and in them Hosius was already his trusted adviser. But in his letters to Chrestus (314) he speaks of those who are "forgetful of their own salvation and the reverence due to the most holy faith," and if his letter to the bishops after the council at Arles—a letter full of expressions like "Christ the Saviour," "brethren beloved," "I who myself await the judgment of Christ," "our Saviour"—be genuine, Constantine was well advanced in his commitment in 314; but whether it is or not, the fact of his Christian advisers, of his laws in behalf of Christians, and various substantial favors to them, his recognition of their God as his one God, makes it almost idle to discuss the question. Was Constantine a Christian in 314? What is a Christian? He seems to have been. The type was that of many a business-man church-member of to-day—Christians, but neither

over-well-instructed, nor dangerously zealous in the exercise of his faith. It must be remembered that during these earlier years his confession of his faith and identification of himself with the Christians was conditioned by his relation to the old religion. Such a change was a radical novelty. His position was not yet secure. He had to use his utmost tact to keep all elements in hand. He was conditioned just as a modern Christian emperor or president, a majority of whose political advisers and subjects or electors are non-religious. He had great problems of political organization to effect, and was immersed in these. The only matter of surprise is that he grew so rapidly. There is no ground whatever for supposing that he dissembled to the end, or even at all. To say that his retaining the title of pontifex maximus, or making concessions respecting the old worship, or allowing soothsayers to be consulted, or even the postponement of his baptism, indicate this, is critical absurdity in the face of evidence. Testimony, both heathen and Christian, to the openness of his action is complete, and the testimony of his acts—such, e.g., as the law for the observance of Sunday—conclusive. Later, at least, he "most openly destroyed temple worship and built Christian houses of worship" (Eunap. *Vita Ædes.* 37, ed. Boiss. p. 20). From the defeat of Licinius on, edicts, letters, speeches, acts of all sorts, testify to a most unequivocal adoption of the Christian religion. Eusebius hardly overstates in saying that "he maintained a continual testimony to his Christianity, with all boldness and before all men, and so far was he from shrinking from an open profession of the Christian name, that he rather desired to make it manifest to all that he regarded this as his highest honor" (*V. C.* 3. 2). Really the question whether he considered himself, or was considered, a Christian at and after the time of the Council of Nicæa is too idle even to mention, if it had not been gravely discussed. In the opinion of the bishops there he was "most pious" and "dear to God" (*Ep. synod.* in Socr. 1. 9; Theodoret, 1. 8). On his part, letters are full of pious expression and usually begin or end or both with "beloved brethren." To the council itself he describes himself as "fellow-servant" of "Him who is our common Lord and Saviour." Another more considerable position is that all that indisputable external connection with Christianity was pure political expediency, that he was a shrewd politician who saw which way the wind was blowing, and had skill to take advantage of it. That Constantine was not a Christian in the strict sense even to the end of his life

was the position of Keim. Burckhardt regards him as a pure politician, without a touch of Christian life. Brieger (1880) says we have not grounds to decide either way, whether he was "a godless egoistic fatalist or had a more or less warm religious or even Christian interest," but that the fixed fact is, that it was not because of his inner belief in the Christian religion that he showed favor to the Christians. In a brief attempt to get some basis in the sources, the enthusiastic testimony of Eusebius and other writers, explicit as it is, may be quite disregarded, even the testimony to facts, such as his practice of giving thanks (*V. C.* 1. 39), of invoking Divine aid (Euseb. *V. C.* 2, 4, 6, 13; Soz. 2. 34), of his erecting a place of prayer in his palace (Soz. 1. 8), of his fasting (*V. C.* 2. 41), of his having a stated hour of prayer (*V. C.* 4. 22), although all these are interesting. The documents, however, unless by supremely uncritical rejection, can be regarded as fundamental sources. A brief analysis of these, even though imperfect, will furnish grounds on the basis of which those who apply various tests may apply them. Starting from his faith in Christ, surely the center of Christianity, he believed Christ to be Son of God, "God and the Son of God the author of every blessing" *(S. C.),* the revealer of the Father, who has "revealed a pure light in the person of Thy Son…and hast thus given testimony concerning Thyself" (*S. C.* 1), proceeding from the Father *(S. C.),* and incarnate, his incarnation having been predicted also by the prophets. He believed this Son of God to be his Saviour (*Ad Tyr., Ad Ant., Ad Euseb.,* &c.) "our common Lord and Saviour" *(Ad Euseb.)*, "our Saviour, our hope, and our life" *(Ad eccl. Al.).* He believed in his miraculous birth *(S. C.)* and in his death for our deliverance (*Ad Nic.;* cf. *Ad Mac.* &c.), "the path which leads to everlasting life" (*S. C.* 1), "a precious and toilsome" work *(Ad Euseb.),* and in his ascension into heaven (*S. C.* 1). He believed in "God the Father" (*Ad Euseb.* 2), "Almighty" *(Ad Euseb.),* Lord of all (*Ad Euseb.* 2), and the Holy Ghost (*Ad eccl. Al.;* cf. *S. C.*). He believed in "Divine Providence" (*Ad Eccl. Al.; Ad Alex. et Ar.; Ad. Euseb.* 1), God the preserver of all men *(Ad Alex. et Ar.),* who sees all things *(Ad Syn. Nic.),* who is near us and the observer of all our actions *(S. C.),* and "under the guidance of whose Almighty hand" he is *(Ad Prov. Pal.),* that all things are regulated by the determination of his will *(Ad Euseb.).* He believed in the existence of a personal devil *(Ad Eccl. Al.).* He believed in the future life *(Ad Prov. Pal.),* "the only true life" (*S. C.* 12), the "strife for immortality" *(Ad Euseb.),* to which those may aspire who

know Him (*S. C.* 12). He believed in future rewards and punishments (*Ad Prov. Pal.; S. C.* 23). He believed in the inspiration of the Scriptures *(Ad Eccl. Al.).* He loved God (*Ad Euseb. 2; V. C.* 2. 55), and considered it his chief work in life to glorify Christ *(S. C.).* He loved his fellow-men, being disposed "to love you with an enduring affection" (*Ad Ant.; V. C.* 3. 60, &c.), and recognized it as virtue in others (8, c. 11). To him, God, in general, is the source of all blessings (*Ad Prov. Pal.; S. C.,* &c.). "I am most certainly persuaded," he says, "that I myself owe my life, my every breath, in short, my very inmost and secret thoughts to the favor of the Supreme God" *(Ad Prov. Pal.).* He recognizes contrition as a requisite for pardon *(Ad. Prov. Pal),* and that it is the power of God which removes guilt *(Ad Euseb.).* In the conduct of life. "Our Saviour's words and precepts are a model, as it were, of what our life should be" (*Ad. Ant.; V. C.* 3. 60).

Expositions of his doctrinal and ethical positions might be multiplied almost without end from the many and fruitful sources, but a few specimens in his own expression will best show the spirit of his religious life. A most suggestive and beautiful sketch of Christ's ministry on earth too long to quote here may be found in his *Oration* (ch. 15), but the following selections will give the idea:

A description of the inner Christian life. "For the only power in man which can be elevated to a comparison with that of God is sincere and guiltless service and devotion of heart to Himself, with the contemplation and study of whatever pleases Him, the raising our affections above the things of earth, and directing our thoughts, as far as we may, to high and heavenly objects" (*S. C.* 14).

A description of the outer Christian life. "Compare our religion with your own. Is there not with us genuine concord, and unwearied love of others? If we reprove a fault, is not our object to admonish, not to destroy; our correction for safety, not for cruelty? Do we not exercise not only sincere faith toward God, but fidelity in the relations of social life? Do we not pity the unfortunate? Is not ours a life of simplicity which disdains to cover evil beneath the mask of fraud and hypocrisy?" (*S. C.* 23).

A prayer. "Not without cause, O holy God, do I prefer this prayer to Thee, the Lord of all. Under Thy guidance have I devised and accomplished measures fraught with blessing; preceded by Thy sacred sign,

I have led Thy armies to victory; and still on each occasion of public danger, I follow the same symbol of Thy perfections while advancing to meet the foe. Therefore have I dedicated to Thy service a soul duly attempered by love and fear. For Thy name I truly love, while I regard with reverence that power of which Thou hast given abundant proofs, to the confirmation and increase of my faith" *(Ad prov. Or.).*

A confession of faith in God and in Christ. "This God I confess that I hold in unceasing honor and remembrance; this God I delight to contemplate with pure and guileless thoughts in the height of his glory." "His pleasure is in works of moderation and gentleness. He loves the meek and hates the turbulent spirit, delighting in faith. He chastises unbelief" *(Ad Sap.).* "He is the supreme judge of all things, the prince of immortality, the giver of everlasting life" (*S. C.* 36).

Was Constantine a Christian? Let each one apply his own test.

§7. *General Characterization.*

Before trying to gather into continuous statement the traits of character which have been examined, a few general characterizations must be mentioned at least. Beginning at the bottom, the unfriendly, or hostile, or at the least unsympathetic, heathen testimonies generalize him as at least relatively and on the whole both great and good. The general tendency of heathen testimony is to represent him as admirable in the early part of his reign, but execrable, or less admirable, in the latter part; that of Christian writers is to represent a growth of excellence, which raises him to saintship at the end. This is most natural. Favoring Christianity was itself a moral fall to a heathen, and bestowing money on Christians would be robbery. The turning of his character was with his changing face towards Christianity, and culminated in the overthrow of Licinius. Licinius fought really as the champion of heathenism. The adherents of a lost cause are characterizing their victor. It is like an ex-Confederate characterizing Lincoln or Grant. The point of view is different. Honest and true men in the South thought Lincoln a curse, and often in popular verdict his character was "black." The popular proverb quoted by Victor (*Epit.* p. 51), "Bull-necked for ten years, for twelve a freebooter, and for ten a spendthrift (immature child)," has just the value of a Southern popular opinion of Lincoln, or a rural Northerner's of "Jeff Davis." Indeed, the first might

summarize at times the Southern popular verdict of Grant; the second, a frequently expressed estimate of Lincoln's conduct in the emancipation of slaves; and the third, their view of the enormous expenditure for pensions of Union soldiers, even as it was fifteen years ago. But even the rather severe Victor, who reports this proverb, finds Constantine "most excellent *(commodissimus)* in many respects,"—in respect of certain laws, in his patronage of the arts, especially that of letters, as scholar, as author, in the hearing of delegations and complaints (p. 51). Again, "Praxagoras, though a heathen, says that in all sorts of virtue and personal excellence and good fortune, Constantine outshone all the emperors who preceded him" (Photius, *Cod.* 62, ed. Müller, p. 1). And finally, the heathen Eutropius, who characterizes from his standpoint so admirably, though he naturally finds that "in the beginning of his reign he might have been compared to the best princes; in the latter part, only to those of middling character," nevertheless records "that innumerable good qualities of mind and body were present in him," and that he was "deservedly enrolled among the gods,"—using the *meruit* which he uses also of Aurelian, but not generally, and not even of Constantius. On purely heathen testimony, therefore, Constantine, taken by and large, was comparatively remarkable and admirable. A moderate Christian characterization is that of Theophanes (p. 29): "Pre-eminent for masculine strength of character, penetration of mind, well-disciplined power of thought; for unbending righteousness, ready benevolence, thorough majestic beauty of countenance, mighty and successful in war, great in wars with the barbarians, invincible in domestic wars, and so firm and unshaken in faith that through prayer he obtained the victory in all his battles." Remembering, therefore, that in order to understand a character in past centuries one must project himself into his time; remembering again the circumstances of his time and its practice, we shall, without forgetting any of the acts on which he has been judged, find him on indisputable testimony superior to most of the other emperors in character, and as much above the circumstances of his times as would characterize a man of to-day as of peculiarly high moral character. In view of this, it is uncritical, and a violence to historical evidence, to approach one whom, at death, the heathen thought worthy to be enrolled among the gods, and the Christians canonized as saint (in the Greek calendar), as other than one who, taken all in all, was of unusual excellence of character.

As in any synthesis, any organization, subordinate facts must be viewed in their relation to their center and whole, as by any law of criminal procedure acts must be judged in the light of general character, so any rational, legal, scientific, historical estimate of Constantine must be in view of this fact.

§8. *Summary.*

With this as center of perspective, we have a picture of Constantine with lights and shadows, to be sure, but in the main true in its drawing and coloring. He was a man of rather more than medium height, strongly built, with broad shoulders, thick neck, and generally athletic and well-formed figure. His piercing eye, slightly aquiline nose, scanty reddish beard, and florid complexion, together with his bright expression, made a countenance striking and even handsome. Of great physical strength and vigor, he carried himself in a manly, self-possessed, dignified, and serene manner, uniting a dignity which might rise at times even to *hauteur,* or even incipient arrogance, with a general and customary affability. His dress, like his complexion, was somewhat florid. His mind was active, alert, intense without being somber, penetrating, sound, fairly cultivated, and well exercised in expression by pen or word. He was animated, habile, and attentive in conversation, self-possessed, steady, and calm in formal address. He was pre-eminently a man of energy, intense and resistless, with a determination to accomplish whatever he attempted, which rose under opposition to irresistible impetuosity, and wrought a courage which, in action, was absolutely fearless. His ambition was limitless, but not wholly or even mainly selfish.

With his energy and ambition were united the ballast of marked prudence, patience, perseverance, faithfulness to details, steadfastness, and supreme self-control. He was amiable and tactful, popular with his soldiers, and careful to please. Toward those who came into his power he showed habitual mildness and forbearance—a mildness so great that he was generally blamed for it; and toward all he showed great kindness, justice, and a generosity which verged on the lavish. He was open to the charge of over-generosity, almost of prodigality, a good measure of real vanity, some over-insistence on his own will and thought as the final standard of right, and by no means free from mistakes or human weaknesses. He was a good son, husband, father, a remarkably successful general, a tolerable legislator,

and a clear-sighted, firm-willed statesman. In his religious life he abounded in creed and confession—believing in the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and Eternal Life, in Repentance and Faith, in love to God, and love to man. He preached his faith on all occasions; he practiced thanksgiving and prayer abundantly. He regarded everything that he had or was as from God. The editor's brief judgment is that Constantine, for his time, made an astonishingly temperate, wise, and, on the whole, benevolent use of absolute power, and in morality, kindly qualities, and, at last, in real Christian character, greatly surpassed most nineteenth century politicians—standing to modern statesmen as Athanasius to modern theologians.

Chapter III - Writings.

§1. *Introduction*

Quite a number of works by this emperor-author are extant. They may be grouped under,

I. Oratorical writings
2. Letters and decrees
3. Laws
4. Various

§2. *Oratorical Writings.*

According to Eusebius (*V. C.* 4. 29; cf. 4. 55) these were very numerous, and it may well be believed. He seems to have done much of everything he undertook at all—fighting, or learning, or building temples, or making laws, he was nothing if not incessant. He had a habit of inflicting his orations on his court, and undoubtedly had plenty of enthusiastic hearers, as any emperor would, and as Eusebius says he did. They seem to have been generally philosophical with as much religion as possible worked in (*V. C.* 4. 9). Not many are extant, but we have some account of the few following:

1. *Oration to the saints (Oratio ad sanctum cœtum,* S. C.). For this see the following translation and Special Prolegomena.

2. *Address to the Council of Nicæa in praise of peace (Ad Syn. Nic.),* in Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 12. Address of welcome. He rejoices in the assembly, and exhorts them to be united, that they may thereby please God and do a favor to their emperor.

3. *Oration to the Council of Nicæa, in Gelasius, Hist. Coun. Nic.* 1. 7. Begins with rhetorical comparison of the Church to a temple, and ends with injunctions to observe peace and to search the Scriptures as the authority in all points of doctrine. Appears dubiously authentic.

4. *Address to the bishops on their departure from Nicæa.* Abstract in

Euseb. *V. C.* 32. 1. Exhorts them to keep peace, cautions against jealousy, &c.

5. *Funeral oration.* A description in Euseb. *V. C.* 4. 55. Dwells on the immortality of the soul, the blessings laid up for those who love God, and the ruin of the ungodly.

His method of composition is spoken of by Eusebius (*V. C.* 4. 29), and his manner of delivery may be gathered from Eusebius' description of his speech at the opening of the Council of Nicæa (*V. C.* 3. 11). For the style of his oratorical discourses, compare remarks on the Oration to the Saints in the Special Prolegomena.

§3. *Letters and Edicts.*

It is hard to separate between letters, edicts, and laws. A substantial autocrat, the form of address was much the same, and the force. The extant letters are quite numerous, and those of which we have definite or general mention, many. He seems to have been a most industrious letter-writer. Of the extant letters a majority are undoubtedly or probably genuine. Some, however, need more critical study than seems to have been given to them. Following is the roughly chronological list, the works being grouped by years. The dating is taken mainly from the Migne edition, Ceillier, and Valesius with slight original study. The descriptions are of course from the documents themselves.

1. (313 A.D.) *Edict of Constantine and Licinius for the restoration of the Church.* In Lact. *De M. P.* c. 48, and also in Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 5 (Op. Const. ed. Migne, 105–110). The second edict of toleration. The first edict (Euseb. 8. 17; Lact. *De M. P.* 34) can hardly be classed among the "writings" of Constantine. This famous second edict grants full religious liberty to the Christians and restoration of their property. Compare section on *Acts of Toleration* in Wordworth's *Constantinus.*

2. (313.) *First letter of Constantine and Licinius to Anulinus.* In Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 5 (Op. Const. ed. Migne, 479–480). Restores goods to the Catholic Christians; written about the same time as the edict of toleration, according to Ceillier.

3. (313.) *Second Letter of Constantine to Anulinus.* In Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 7 (Op. Const. 481–2). Ordering that the Catholic clergy be free from public service, that they might not be disturbed in their worship of God.

4. (313.) *Letter of Constantine to Cæcilianus.* In Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 6 (Op. Const. 481–4). Presents money—three thousand purses (folles)—to be distributed according to direction of Hosius.

5. (313.) *Letter of Constantine to Melchiades (or Miltiades).* In Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 5 (Op. Const. 477-). Having received various letters from Anulinus regarding Cæcilian and the Donatists, he summons a council at Rome to consider the matter.

6. (314.) *Letter of Constantine to Ablavius (or Ælafius).* In Optat. *Mon. vet.* p. 283–4 (Op. Const. 483–6). The result of the council at Rome not having proved final, he summons the Council of Arles.

7. (314.) *Letter of Constantine to Chrestus (Crescentius), bishop of Syracuse.* In Euseb. *H. E.* 10. 5 (Op. Const. 485–8). Invites to the Council of Arles.

8. (314.) *Letter of Constantine to the Bishops after the Council of Arles.* In Optat. *Mon. vet.* p. 287–8 (Op. Const. 487–90). Contains gratulations, reprobations of obstinate schismatists, and exhortations to patience with such obstinateness. It is full of religious expressions, and if genuine, is a most interesting exhibition of Constantine's religious position at this time, but it looks suspicious, and probably is not genuine.

9. (314) *Letter of Constantine and Licinius to Probianus, the Proconsul of Africa.* In Augustine, *Ep.* 88 (ed. Migne 33 [1865] 3045), and also in *Contr. Cresc*. (43 [1861] 540, also in Op. Const. and tr. Engl. in Schaff, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* 1, p. 370). Orders that the Donatist Ingentius be brought to his court. One text adds Maximianus or Maximus in place of Maximus as epithet of Constantine.

10. (314 or 315.) *Letter of Constantine to the Donatist Bishops.* In Optat. *Mon. vet.* p. 290 (Op. Const. ed. Migne [1844] 490). As the Donatists were not yet satisfied, he summons them to meet Cæcilian, and promises if they convict him in one particular, it shall be as if in all.

11. (315.) *Letter of Constantine to Celsus.* In Optat. *Mon. vet* p. 291 (Op. Const. 489–90). In reply to letter mentioning disturbances of the Donatists, he hints that he expects to go shortly to Africa and settle things summarily.

12. (315.) *Fragment of a Letter of Constantine to Eumalius Vicarius.* In Augustine's *Contr. Crest.* 3. 71 (ed. Migne 43 [1861] 541; also Op. Const. 491–2). An extract of six lines, in which he says Cæcilianus was entirely innocent.

13. (316 or 317.) *Letter of Constantine to the bishops and people of Africa.* Optat. *Mon. vet.* p. 294 (Op. Const. 491–2). He has tried every way to settle the Donatist disturbances in vain, and now leaves them to God and advises patience.

14. (323.) *First Letter of Constantine to Eusebius.* In Euseb. *V. C.* 2. 46; Theodoret, 1. 14; Socr. 1. 9 (Op. Const. 491–4). Empowers the repairing, enlarging of old, and building of new churches.

15. (323 A.D.) *Law of Constantine respecting piety toward God and the Christian Religion* (Ad prov. Pal.). In Euseb. *V. C.* 2. 24–42; abstr. in Soz. 1. 8 (Op. Const. 253–282). This long edict, addressed to the inhabitants of Palestine, contains an exposition of the prosperity which attends the righteous and the adversity which comes to the wicked, followed by edict for the restitution of confiscated property, the recall of exiles, and various other rectifications of injustices. This is the copy, "or letter," sent to the heathen population of the empire.

16. (324.) *Constantine's edict to the people of the eastern provinces concerning the error of polytheism,* &c. (Ad. prov. Or). In Euseb. *V. C.* 48– This letter, written in Latin and translated by Eusebius, begins with "some general remarks on virtue and vice," touches on the persecutions and the fate of the persecutors, expresses the wish that all would become Christians, praises God, and exhorts concord.

17. (323 or 324.) *Letter of Constantine to Alexander the Bishop and Arius the Presbyter.* In Euseb. *V. C.* 2. 64–72; Gelas. 2. 4; Socr. 1. 7 (Op. Const. 493–502). Expresses his desire for peace, his hope that they might have helped him in the Donatist troubles, his distress at finding that they, too, were in a broil, his opinion that the matters under discussion are of little moment, and what he thinks they are. He exhorts to unanimity, repeats his opinion that the matters are of little moment, mentions his "copious and constant tears," and finally gets through.

18. (324–5.) *Letter to Porphyrius* (Optatian). In Migne, *Patrol. Lat.* 19

[1846] 393–394 and in various editions of Optatian. This letter to Porphyrius or Optatian was on the occasion of the sending of a poem by the latter for his vicennalia. It expresses his pleasure and his disposition to encourage the cultivation of *belles lettres.* Compare note on Optatian under sources.

19. (325.) *Letter of Constantine the King, summoning the bishops to Nicæa.* In Cowper, *Syriac Misc.,* Lond. 1841, p. 5–6. This is translated from a Syriac ms. in the British Museum, written in 501. Gives as reason for the choice of Nicæa the convenience for the European bishops and "the excellent temperature of the air." This, if genuine, is the letter mentioned by Eusebius, *V. C.*, but it looks suspicious.

20. (325.) *Letter of Constantine to the churches after the Council of Nicæa.* In Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 17–20; Socr. 1. 9 (Op. Const. 501–506). Dwells on the harmonious result, especially respecting the Easter controversy, and commends to the bishops to observe what the Council has decreed.

21. (325.) *Letter of Constantine to the church of Alexandria*. In Socr. 1. 9 (Op. Const. 507–510). Expresses great horror of the blasphemy of Arius, and admiration for the wisdom of the more than three hundred bishops who condemned him.

22. (325.) *Letter of Constantine to Arius and the Arians.* In "Conc. 2. 269." A long and rather railing address against Arius.

23. (325.) *Letter of Constantine to the churches.* In Socr. *H. E.* 1. 9. A translation of a Syriac translation of this, written in 501, in Cowper, *Syriac Misc.*, Lond. 1861, p. 6–7. Against Arius and the Porphyrians, and threatens that any one who conceals a work of Arius shall be punished with death.

24. (325.) *Letter of Constantine to the Nicomedians against Eusebius and Theognis.* In Gelas. 3. 2; Theodoret, 1. 20; Soz. 1. 21 (Op. Const. 519–524). A theological discussion partly of the relation of Father and Son, and an attack on Eusebius of Nicomedia.

25. (325.) *Letter to Theodotus.* In Gelas. 3. 3 (Op. Const. 523–524). Counsels him to take warning by what has happened to Eusebius (of Nicomedia) and Theognis, i.e. banishment, and get rid of such evil influence, if any, as they may have had on him.

26. (325.) *Letter of Constantine to Macarius*. In Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 30–32; Theodoret, 1. 16. Directs the erection of a peculiarly magnificent church at the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

27. (330.) *Letter of Constantine to the Numidian Bishops*. In Optat. *Mon. vet.* p. 295 (Op. Const. 531–532). Concerns a church taken possession of by schismatists.

28. (332.) *Letter of Constantine to the Antiochians*. In Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 60 (Op. Const. 533-). Exhorts them not to persist in their effort to call Eusebius from Cæsarea to Antioch.

29. (332 a.d.) *Letter of Constantine to the Synod of Tyre deprecating the removal of Eusebius from Cæsarea*. In Euseb. *V. C.* 362; Theodoret, 1. 27 (Op. Const. 543–546).

30. (332.) *Second Letter of Constantine to Eusebius*. In Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 61 (Op. Const. 537–540). Commends Eusebius for having declined the call to Antioch.

31. (332.) *Second Letter of Constantine to Macarius and the rest of the Bishops in Palestine (to Eusebius)*. In Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 52–53 (Op. Const. 539–544). Directs the suppression of idolatrous worship at Mamre.

32. (332.?) *Edict against the heretics*. In Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 64–5. Against Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, Paulians, Cataphrygians who are forbidden to assemble and whose houses of worship are to be given to the Catholic party.

33. (333.) *Letter of Constantine to Sapor, King of the Persians*. In Euseb. 4. 9–13; Theodoret, 1. 24 (Op. Const. 545–552). Is mainly a confession of faith commending the Persian Christians to the special care of their king.

34. (333.) *Letters of Constantine to Antonius, the monk, and of Antonius to him* are mentioned in Athanasius, 1. 855 (Op. Const. 551–552). Constantine and his sons write as to a father. Antony grudgingly replies with some good advice for them to remember the day of judgment, regard Christ as the only emperor, and have a care for justice and the poor.

35. (333.) *Letter of Constantine to Eusebius in praise of his discourse concerning Easter*. Eusebius, *V. C.* 4. 35 (Op. Const. 551–554) praises the

discourse and asks for more.

36. (333.) *Letter of Constantine to Eusebius on the preparation of the copies of the Scriptures*. In Euseb. *V. C.* 4. 36; Theod. 1. 15; Socr. 1. 9 (Op. Const. 553–554). Orders fifty copies with directions as to style.

37. (335.) *Fragment of the first letter of Constantine to Athanasius*. In Athan. *Apol.*; Socr. 27 (Op. Const. 553–556; Tr. Engl. in Athan. *Hist. Tracts*, Oxf. 1843, p. 89). The letter summoning to the Council of Tyre, but only a half-dozen lines remain. This bids him admit all who wish to enter the church.

38. (335.) *Letter of Constantine to the people of the Alexandrian Church*. In Athan. *Apol. c. Ar.* c. 61 (Op. Const. 559–562; abstract in Soz. 2. 31; Tr. Engl. in Athan. *Hist. Tracts*, Oxf. 1850, p. 90–92). Is a general lamentation over the dissensions of the Church, with expression of confidence in Athanasius.

39. (335.) *Second Letter of Constantine to Athanasius*. Athan. *Apol.* (Op. Const. 555–558). Expresses his reprobation of the false accusations of the Meletians against Athanasius.

40. (335.) *Letter of Constantine to Joannes the Meletian*. Athan. *Apol.* (Op. Const. 557–560). Congratulates on his reconciliation with Athanasius.

41. (335.) *Letter of Constantine to Arius*. In Socr. 1. 25 (Op. Const. 561–562). Invites Arius to visit him—the famous visit where he presented a confession of faith claimed to be in conformity with that of Nicæa.

42. (335.) *A Letter to Dalmatius* is mentioned by Athanasius, *Apol.* 5. 13, but not preserved (Op. Const. 563–564; Tr. Engl. in Athan. *Hist. Tracts*, Oxf. 1850, p. 94). It required him to make judicial enquiry respecting the charge against Athanasius of the murder of Arsenius.

43. (335.) *Celebrated Letter of Constantine concerning the Synod of Tyre*. In Euseb. *V. C.* 3. 42 (Op. Const. 561–564). Exhorts the bishops to give zeal to fulfilling the purpose of the synod in the restitution of peace to the Church. (335.) *Letter to the Bishops assembled at Tyre*. In Socr. *H. E.* 1. 34, and in Soz. *H. E.* 28. Summons them to come to him at Constantinople and give account of their proceedings.

Besides these there are the clearly spurious:

1. *Letter of Helena to Constantine* (Op. Const. 529–530).

2. *Letter of Constantine in response to Helena* (Op. Const. 529–532).

3. *Treaty of peace between Constantine, Sylvester and Tiridates* (Op. Const. 579–582). On Tiridates compare various sources in Langlois *Col. des historiens de…l'Armènie*, and for literature respecting their authenticity, his note on p. 103.

4. *Edict of Constantine to Pope Silvester* (Op. Const. 567–578). The famous Donation which first appeared in Pseudo-Isidore, and for which see under *The Mythical Constantine*, p. 442–3.

There are also quite a large number of letters mentioned with more or less description, and a "multitude of letters" (*V. C.* 3. 24) of which there is no specific knowledge. Of the former may be mentioned that *to the inhabitants of Heliopolis*, one to Valerius (or Valerianus or Verinus) (Augustine, *Ad Donat. p. c.* c. 33); one *to the Council of Tyre*, asking them to hasten to Jerusalem (*V. C.* 4. 43; Soz. 2. 26); and one acknowledging the copies of the Scriptures prepared at his order, through Eusebius (*V. C.* 4. 37).

§4. *Laws.*

The numerous laws are collected in the edition of Migne (*Patrol. Lat.* 8. p. 93–400), mainly from the Theodosian code. They are in the opinion of Eutropius (10. 8) "many," "some good and equitable, but most of them superfluous, and some severe" (cf. under *Character*). Many of them show the author's tendency to declamation, but taken all in all they are businesslike and do credit, in the main, to their author's heart, and even, though less conspicuously, to his head. For more specific account, compare the laws themselves as collected in Migne, the relating passages in Wordsworth and Ceillier, standard and annotated editions of the codes, and special treatises, such as Balduin, *De leg. eccl. et civ*. 1737.

§5. *Various.*

Besides the more formal works mentioned above, various conversations, sayings, bon mots, prayers, &c., are preserved, among which may be mentioned:

1. *Memoirs of himself*, of which no portion is extant. Writings of Constantine are mentioned by Lydus (p. 194, 226), but whether the writings referred to deserve the title given by Burckhardt it is hard to say.

2. *A form of prayer* given by Constantine to his soldiers (*V. C.* 4. 20).

3. *His address* when the memorials of contendents, at Council of Nicæa, were brought to him (Soz. 1. 17).

4. *The conversation with Acesius*, for which Socrates vouches, closing, "O Acesius, set up a ladder, and do you alone climb up to heaven."

5. *His rebuke to the courtier* concerning covetousness (*V. C.* 4. 30).

6. *His answer* when told his statues had been stoned, "Strange, but I feel no wound" ("Chrysost. *Ad Pop. Ant.*").

7. *His appeal to the bishops*, requesting them to confer upon him the rite of baptism (*V. C.* 4. 62).

8. *His Thanksgiving* after baptism *and testimony* (*V. C.* 4. 63).

In general, his writings were composed in Latin, and translated into Greek by those appointed for this special purpose (*V. C.* 4. 32). His general style is rhetorical, rather profuse, and declamatory, abounding in pious allusion and exhortation, as well as philosophical quotation and reflection. His works are interesting to study and not without a touch here and there of genuine literary interest. A remark on friendship, for example, unless it be a product of his habit of borrowing the thoughts of other men more or less directly, is delightful and most quotable. "For it often happens," he says, "that when a reconciliation is effected by the removal of the causes of enmity, friendship becomes even sweeter than it was before" (Const. to Alex. and Ar. in *V. C.* 2. 71).

Chapter IV - The Mythical Constantine.

The many legends which have attached themselves to the name of Constantine are valuable chiefly as curiosities, and can be treated here only in specimens. A few of the more interesting and important are the following:

1. *Constantine and his Mother Helena.*

A little anonymous work of some thirty pages, edited by Heydenreich from a fourteenth-century manuscript, was published under this title in 1879, and has drawn forth an astonishing amount of literature for so slight a thing. It has little value except as an illustration of mediæval romance, though Coen seems to think the honor of having introduced it into literature enough to warrant the expenditure of a good deal of pains in vindicating his claim to it. The story is written with tolerable art, and runs, abbreviated, something as follows:

Helena, daughter of a noble family of Trèves, came on a pious journey to Rome. The Emperor Constantius, crossing a bridge of the Tiber, saw Helena among other pilgrims. Struck with her beauty, he arranged that she should be detained by force at the inn where she stayed, when her fellow-pilgrims returned to Gaul. The emperor then constrained her by force, but, seeing the great grief which his act had caused, gave her a certain ornament of precious stones and his ring, as a sort of pledge, and went away. She did not venture to return to her country, but remained at Rome with the son who was born to her, representing that her Gallic husband was dead. This son, Constantine, grew up pleasing, handsome, and versatile. Certain merchants, seeing his excellent quality, formed a scheme of making money by palming him off on the emperor of the Greeks as a son-in-law, representing him to be a son of the Roman emperor.

The scheme was carried out, and the merchants after some time embarked again for Rome, with the Constantine and the princess, and much treasure. Toward the end of their journey they stopped over night at a little island. In the morning the young people awoke to find they had

been deserted by the merchants, and Constantine in great grief confessed the deception which had been practiced. To this the princess replied that she cared little who he was or his family, since he was himself and her husband. After a few days of short rations they were taken by passing voyagers to Rome, where they joined Helena, and having purchased a house with the proceeds from the sale of certain valuables which the princess had kept with her, they went to hotel-keeping. Constantine took naturally to military life, and at tournaments surpassed everyone else so far as to arouse astonishment and inquiry. The emperor would not believe him a poor and friendless man, and had his mother called. After much vigorous evasion the truth came out, confirmed by the ring which the emperor had given Helena. Constantius first had the merchants put to death, and gave all their property to Constantine. Then a treaty was made with the emperor of the East, and Constantine was recognized as heir to the empire.

A more wildly unhistorical historical novel could hardly have been written even by a Muhlbach. For further account, see under *Literature* especially articles by Heydenreich and by Coen.

2. *Constantine the Son of a British Princess.*

Duke Coel of Colchester, say the old chronicles, by an insurrection became king. The Senate, rejoiced at the overthrow of an enemy, sent Constantius to Britain. Coel, fearing, sent ambassadors to meet him, gave hostages, and shortly died. Constantius was crowned, married Helena, daughter of Coel, the most beautiful, cultivated, and educated woman of her time. By her he had a son, Constantine, afterwards called the Great. This is in substance the account of Geoffrey of Monmouth (5. 6) and Pierre de Langloft (1, p. 66–7). The story is mentioned by Henry of Huntington (Bk. I. 37), who perhaps wrote before Geoffrey (in 1137 [?]), and Richard of Cirencester (2. 1. 33). Waurin (Vol. I. Bk. 2. 43) makes "Choel" Count of Leicester, but in general is identical with Geoffrey. The famous Brut of Layamon (ed. Madden, 2 [1847] p. 35) is translated with amplifications from Wace's Brut, and this in turn from Geoffrey. This makes Coel Earl of Gloucester. The Eulogium Hist. calls Helena (1. 337) daughter of a British king, but also concubine, though elsewhere (2, p. 267) she is wife according to the conventional story. It is also mentioned by many others; e.g. Voragine, *Golden Legend*. It is interesting that this

legendary father of Helena is supposed (Hayden, Index to Eulogium, p. 45, and Giles, note on Geoffrey, p. 162) to be the same as "Old King Cole, the merry old soul," making Constantine thus the grandson of the Mother Goose hero.

3. *Constantine's Leprosy; Healing and Baptism by Silvester*.

This tale is one of the most frequently found. The earliest account is said to be that of the Acts of Silvester. Some of the many who repeat it are Ephraem, Cedrenus, Zonaras. The following account is mainly from Glycas, p. 461–462.

When Constantine was fighting against Maxentius, after he had seen the sign of the cross, he was victorious. Then, forgetting, he was conquered, and grieving, he fell asleep and had a vision in which the blow of a switch on his nostrils brought blood which flowed down on his linen tunic in the form of a cross. Seeing this, he was filled with penitence, and became again victorious. Being led away a second time into idolatry through his wife Fausta, he was divinely afflicted with leprosy. The priests prescribed a bath in the blood of infants, and it was ordered; but when he heard the lamentations of the mothers, he said it was better to suffer than that so many infants should perish. Therefore the apostles, Peter and Paul as some say, appeared to him and told him Silvester would cure him, as he did. There are many varieties of the story and various details as to baptism, but in general the whole series of stories regarding his baptism at Rome centers in this story, and gratitude for this cure is the supposed occasion of the famous donation of Constantine. In this the circumstances of the miracle are given at length—the words of the apostles, Silvester's identification of them as apostles by portraits, the immersion, and subsequent instruction.

4. *Donation of Constantine*.

This most remarkable of forgeries for its practical effect on world-history has been the subject of endless discussion. It is, in brief, a supposed grant to the Pope of Rome, Silvester, of certain sweeping privileges in recognition of the miracle he has wrought. The edict gives a long confession of faith followed by an account of the miracle and mention of the churches he has built. Then follow the grants to Silvester, sovereign Pontiff and Pope of Rome, and all his successors until the end of the world—the

Lateran palace, the diadem, phryginus, the purple mantle and scarlet robe, imperial scepters, insignia, banners and the whole imperial paraphernalia, as well as various clerical privileges and pretty much the whole world to govern. It is impossible here even to represent in outline the history of this extraordinary fiction. Composed not earlier than the latter part of the eighth century (Martens et alt. 9 cent.; Grauert, 840–850; Hauck, Bonneau, 752–757; Langen, 778, &c.; Friedrich acc. to Seeberg, divides into an earlier [653] and a later [753] portion), it early came to be general, though not unquestioned, authority. In 1229–1230 a couple of unfortunates who ventured to doubt its authenticity were burned alive at Strasburg (Documents communicated by Ristelhuber to Bonneau p. 57–58). Not many years after, Dante seems (*Inf*. 19. 115) to have taken its authenticity for granted; and although there is a possible doubting (*De Monarch*. 4. 10), he does not venture to dispute this. He denies, however, Constantine's power or right to give, if he did give. In modern times the fictitious character of the document is recognized by Protestants and Catholics alike, and the discussion, so vigorous formerly, over this authenticity has narrowed itself chiefly to a discussion of the place (France or Rome) and date (653–753, ninth century) and possible author. The discussion over these points has been lately renewed and is being carried on with animation. Among the later monographs are those of Martens (1889) and Friedrich (1889, not at hand). The latest treatise at hand is that of Seeberg in the Theol. Literaturbl. of Jan. 17. 24. 31 of the current year. For farther select literature, compare *Verzeichniss* in Martens; for sources, the chapters of Martens and Preface of Bonneau; for older literature, Muensch. p. 96–97, and in general the *Literature* of Constantine, in this volume, although no attempt has been made to exhaust the literature of this sub-topic there. Treatises on the Donation will be found under the names of Albani, Altus, Arrhenius, Bachmann, Bayet, Bonneau, Brunner, Chaulnes, Colombier, Cusa, Friedrich, Genelin, Grauert, Hauck, Hildebrand, Jacobatius, Kaufman, Krüger, Martens, Muench, Rallaye, Scheffer-Boichorst, Seeberg, Steuchus, Tacut, Valla, Walther, Wieland, Zeumer.

5. *Dream concerning the Founding of Constantinople*.

"As Constantine was sleeping in this city [Byzantium], he imagined that there stood before him an old woman whose forehead was furrowed with age; but that presently, clad in an imperial robe, she became

transformed into a beautiful girl, and so fascinated his eyes by the elegance of her youthful charms that he could not refrain from kissing her; that Helena, his mother, being present, then said, 'She shall be yours forever; nor shall she die till the end of time.' The solution of this dream, when he awoke, the emperor extorted from heaven, by fasting and alms-giving. And behold, within eight days, being cast again into a deep sleep, he thought he saw Pope Silvester, who died some little time before, regarding his convert with complacency, and saying, 'You have acted with your customary prudence in waiting for a solution from God of that enigma which was beyond the comprehension of man. The old woman you saw is this city, worn down by age, whose time-struck walls, menacing approaching ruin, require a restorer. But you, renewing its walls, and its affluence, shall signalize it also with your name; and here shall the imperial progeny reign forever'" (William of Malmesbury, Chronicle, tr. English. Lond. 1847, p. 372–3. The final section, which instructs Constantine how to lay out the city, is omitted). This is taken by the Chronicler from Aldhelm's (d. 709) *de laudibus virginitatis* (c. 52, ed. Giles, 1844, p. 28–29), where, however, instead of kissing her, he much more appropriately "clothes her with his mantle, and puts his diadem adorned with pure gold and brilliant gems on her head." It is given also by Ralph de Diceto (ed. Stubbs, Lond. 1876), 74–75, and probably by many others.

6. *Voyage of Helena*.

A matter-of-fact account of things which are not so, given in Hakluyt's *Voyages*, 2 (1810), p. 34, is worth giving in the words of the translator:

"Helena Flavia Augusta, the heire and onely daughter of Cœlus, sometime the most excellent king of Britaine, by reason of her singular beautie, faith, religion, goodnesse, and godly Maiestie (according to the testimonie of Eusebius) was famous in all the world. Amongst all the women of her time there was none either in the liberall arts more learned, or in the instruments of musike more skilfull, or in the divers languages of nations more abundant than herselfe. She had a naturall quicknesse of wit, eloquence of speech, and a most notable grace in all her behaviour. She was seene in the Hebrew, Greeke, and Latin tongues. Her father (as Virumnius reporteth) had no other childe,…had by her a sonne called Constantine the great, while hee remained in Britaine…peace was granted

to the Christian churches by her good meanes. After the light and knowledge of the Gospel, she grew so skilfull in divinity that she wrote and composed divers bookes and certaine Greeke verses also, which (as Ponticus reporteth) are yet extant…went to Jerusalem…lived to the age of fourscore years, and then died at Rome the fifteenth day of August, in the yeere of oure redemption 337…Her body is to this day very carefully preserved at Venice."

7. *The Finding of the Cross.*

It is said in a certain "tolerably authentic chronicle," according to Voragine, that Constantine sent his mother Helena to Jerusalem to try to find the cross on which our Lord was crucified. When she arrived, she bade all the Jewish Rabbis of the whole land gather to meet her. Great was their fear. They suspected that she sought the wood of the cross, a secret which they had promised not to reveal even under torture, because it would mean the end of Jewish supremacy. When they met her, sure enough, she asked for the place of the crucifixion. When they would not tell, she ordered them all to be burned. Frightened, they delivered up Judas, their leader and instigator, saying that he could tell. She gave him his choice of telling or dying by starvation. At first he was obstinate, but six days of total abstinence from food brought him to terms, and on the seventh he promised. He was conducted to the place indicated, and in response to prayer, there was a sort of earthquake, and a perfume filled the air which converted Judas. There was a temple of Venus on the spot. This the queen had destroyed. Then Judas set to digging vigorously, and at the depth of twenty feet, found three crosses, which he brought to Helena. The true cross was tested by its causing a man to rise from the dead, or according to others, by healing a woman, or according to others, by finding the inscription of Pilate. After an exceedingly vigorous conversation between the devil and Judas, the latter was baptized and became Bishop Cyriacus. Then Helena set him hunting for the nails of the cross. He found them shining like gold and brought them to the queen, who departed, taking them and a portion of the wood of the cross. She brought the nails to Constantine, who put them on his bridle and helmet, or according to another account, two were used in this way, and one was thrown into the Adriatic Sea.

It is interesting to trace the melancholy consequences of this particular enterprise of Constantine's in the sad death of St. Cyriacus née Judas. The Emperor Julian, the apostate, "invited" him to sacrifice to idols. When he refused, melted lead was poured into his mouth; then an iron bedstead was brought, on which he was stretched, while a fire was built underneath and the body of the martyr larded with salt and fat. The saint did not budge, and Julian had a deep well dug, which was filled with venomous serpents. But contact with the saint killed the serpents, and a cauldron of boiling oil succeeded. Julian was so angry at the alacrity and cheerfulness of the saint's preparations for this bath, that he killed him with a blow of his sword. There is some consolation in the thought of this premature death, in the fact that, unless his claim that he was nephew to Stephen, the Proto-martyr, be disallowed, he had reached a ripe old age of two hundred and fifty years or thereabouts.

The literature on this legend is very great. The finding of the cross is mentioned as early as Cyril of Jerusalem (ab. 347–350), within twenty-five years of the visit of Helena recorded by Eusebius (*V. C.* 3. 26), and with great frequency afterwards. The failure of any mention by Eusebius seems, however, conclusive against any finding, or pretended finding, at the time of Helena's famous visit, though the contrary is acutely argued by Newman. The finding and use of the nails is often separated from the other, and is found in many of the sources on Constantine. But even those who believe in the miracle of the finding of the cross will hardly vouch for the story in the above form, which is substantially that of Voragine.

Compare Sinker's article, *Cross, Finding of*, in Smith and Cheetham, *Dict*. 1 (1880), 503–506; Jameson, *Hist. of Our Lord*, 2 (1872) 385–391; Newman, *Essays on Miracles* (Lond. 1875) 287–326; and especially Voragine, whom see under Sources. Under the article Helena, in Smith & W. is a sub-article by Argles on the *Invention of the Cross*, which gives an admirable abstract of the sources in order.

These examples of the stories which have gathered around the name of Constantine do not begin to exhaust the list. The interesting tales of the sword of Constantine presented to Athelstan (*Reg. Malms*. 1, 1879, p. 55, 468; *Eul. Hist*. 3, 1863, p. 12), his conversion through remorse, and the whole series of allusions and stories in mediæval fiction and poetry must be

passed here. If any one has the curiosity to follow them up, he will find the references in the articles of Heydenreich a good guide to literature. A few stories, like that of Constantine and Tiridates, one hesitates to class among the wholly fictitious (compare, under *Sources*, Agathangelos, Zenobius, and Faustus).

Chapter V - Sources and Literature.

§1. *Introduction*

The insertion in such a work as this of what seems almost technical in its character has this twofold purpose: first, to give a glimpse of the grounds of our knowledge of Constantine, with a view of how far and in what directions it has been worked out through literature; second, to serve the expressed purpose of this series, of encouraging farther study in its lines. The very knowledge of what the sources are, and their character, apart from any special study of them, gives a width of horizon and definiteness of conception to the general student, which can hardly be gotten in any other way; while for any one who plans farther study in any line, it is of first importance to find the what and where of his material.

§2. *Sources.*

Remembering the class of students for which the series is chiefly intended, effort has been made to refer to translations of sources where they are at hand, and to refer to the best accessible English authorities on them. But the plan has been to refer to the source itself in the edition actually used, and for literature on them to choose the best for ready reference. Both editions and authorities on sources are therefore selections, usually from many, of such as seem most directly useful. The intention has been to guide to all frequently mentioned sources, whether they were of great value or not, since a useless one costs often quite as much trouble to hunt up and find useless, as a good one to use. It is hardly to be hoped that all the sources often referred to have been gathered, but the following list represents pretty much all that are worth mentioning, and some which are not.

1. *Inscriptions, coins, medals, &c.*

In some sense these are the most reliable of sources, in spite of counterfeits. A large number will be found collected in Clinton. For farther critical study, compare the collections, great and small; for which, with the matter of inscriptions in general, see Hicks, E. L., and Hübner, E., in the

Encyclopædia Britannica, 13 (1881) 121–133; and Babington, in Smith and Cheetham, 1 (1880) 841–862. Monographs on those relating to Constantine will be found under the names, Cavedoni, Cigola, Eltz, Freherus, Garucci, Harduin, Penon, Revellot, Valois, Westphalen, Werveke, in the *Literature* of this volume.

2. *Laws*.

These, with their dates, their official nature, their fullness and variety, are primary, and are the only sources recognized by some. They are embodied in the Theodosian and Justinian Codes, and collected from these are edited in Migne, *Patrol. Latina*, Vol. 8. See under *Writings* of Constantine, above.

3. *Other Writings by Constantine*.

See under *Writings*, above. With this might perhaps be included also writings *to* Constantine, like that of Anulinus in Augustinus, *Ep*. 88.

4. *General Literary Sources*.

Taking in general chronological order, without attempting the impossibility of fixing the exact chronological place, the first group of contemporary sources is that of the Panegyrists (for collected editions, see Engelmann). It was a serious mistake, now recognized, to pass them by as worthless. Like all authentic documents, they have a minimum residuum of undoubted material, which is larger or smaller according to the critical acumen of the investigator. In the case of these, however inflated or eulogistic they may be, the circumstances under which they were spoken give a considerable value.

Special Prolegomena.

§1. The Life of Constantine.

1. *English translations*

The first English translation of Eusebius was by Merideth Hanmer (compare Prolegomena of Dr. McGiffert). The first editions of Hanmer did not contain the Life of Constantine. It is a little hard to distinguish the early editions, but there were at least three, and perhaps four, editions (1577 (76), 1585 (84), 1607, 1619?), before there was added in 1637 to the 1636 edition ("fourth edition" not "fifth edition 1650," as Wood, *Athenæ Oxon.*).

2. *Author and date*

Almost no fact of history is unquestioned; therefore the unquestionable authorship of Eusebius has been questioned. Some have made the author Macarius (compare Vog. Hist. lit. p. 12), evidently on the ground of the letter (3. 52) which the author says was addressed to himself, but which is to Macarius and others, but there is no real doubt of the Eusebian authorship. It was written after the death of Constantine (337), and therefore between 337 and 340, when Eusebius died. The interesting hypothesis of Meyer (p. 28) that it was perhaps written mainly in Constantine's lifetime, at the suggestion and under the direction of Constantine, to defend him against charges brought, or which might be brought, against him, is worth mentioning, although it is more ingenious than probable. The headings of the chapters are by another, though probably not much later, and a competent hand (cf. Lightfoot).

3. *Trustworthiness of Eusebius*

The value of a writer is determined by (1) His sources of knowledge, (2) His own intellectual and moral ability. Again, the criticism of a given work seeks whether the aim proposed for that work has been truly fulfilled. A man who attempts a treatise on Geometry is not to be criticised because he omits mention of sulphuric acid, or if he proposes a description of Wagner's

music, because he does not produce a Helmholtz on Sound. The application of these principles to Eusebius' Life of Constantine requires brief examination of 1. The proposed scope of the work. 2. The character of the sources. 3. The intellectual and moral competency of Eusebius on the premises.

(1) *The Scope of the Work*. This is quite definitely outlined (i. 11). In contrast with those who have recorded the evil deeds of other emperors and have thus "become to those who by some favor had been kept apart from evil, teachers not of good, but of what should be silenced in oblivion and darkness," he proposes to record the noble actions of this emperor. He proposes, however, to pass over many things—his wars, personal bravery, victories, and successes, his legislative acts, and many other things, and confine himself to such things as have reference to his religious character. His aim, therefore, is distinctly limited to his religious acts, and it is not stretching his meaning too far to say, expressly limited to his virtuous actions.

(2) *Character of the Sources*. Respecting this there is endless controversy. The fullness of material is unquestionable, the intellectual competency of Eusebius is almost equally so, and the questionings regard mainly whether the author has made a proper use of material. Opinions are various, but this does not mean that they are equally well grounded and valuable. Some of the latest judgments are the most severe. Crivellucci (Livorno, 1888) calls it an historical novel, and Görres, in a review of Crivellucci, agrees that it is worth less than the Panegyrics of Eumenius and Nazarius, which is certainly milder than Manso's (p. 222) "more shameless and lying" than these. Right or wrong, this is a frequently repeated view. Some (Hely, p. 141) cannot speak too strongly of the "contempt" which he "deserves," and accuse of "pious fraud" or the next thing to it (Kestner, 1816, p. 67). For farther criticisms consult the works cited by Dr. McGiffert under *Literature*, and the special works on Eusebius cited in the *Literature* to Constantine above, *passim*. The criticisms group generally around 1. The suppression of the facts respecting the deaths of Crispus, &c., and various others derogatory to Constantine. 2. The eulogistic tone and coloring of the work, especially the very pietistic saintly sort of flavor given to Constantine.

As to the suppression of facts, note (1) That he gives entire warning of

his plan. It would have been artistically and ethically improper, in a work which distinctly sets out with such purpose, to admit that class of facts. It takes more or less from the value of the work, but it does not reflect on the general trustworthiness of what is said. (2) No similar judgment is passed on Eutropius, the Victors, Anonymous Valesianus or Zosimus, for not mentioning his pious acts. (3) A comparison of most biographies of living and dead presidents, kings, and emperors will be greatly to the advantage, even, of this fourth century eulogist over those of our boasted critical age.

As to the eulogistic and exaggerated tone, observe (1) That it was more or less justified. That is, the premises of the criticism which are substantially that Constantine was not saintly or pietistic and was non-committal toward Christianity, are false. His extreme testimony is backed by very general testimony in the election of Constantine to technical saintship. (2) That is compares well with modern eulogists and extremely well with the contemporary Panegyrists of Constantine. (3) That Eusebius takes care frequently to guard his statements by quoting his source, as in the matter of the vision of the cross, or by ascribing to hearsay. In general, the work stands much on the same level as the biographies of generals in the late civil war, or of presidents, written by admiring members of their staffs or cabinets, incorporating authentic documents, intending to be truthful, and generally succeeding, but yet full of the enthusiasm of admiring friendship and inclined not to see, or to extenuate or even suppress, faults and mistakes. Nevertheless, they are valuable on the positive side as the real testimony to genuinely believed excellency by those in the position to know intimately. Eusebius is, substantially, genuine. Such supreme hypocrisy as would produce this work, without admiring respect and *after its subject was dead*, is inconceivable in him. All the unconscious turns of phrase show at least a consistent attitude of mind. The work is, in brief, by a competent author, from ample sources and without intentional falsification or misrepresentation. It probably represents the current Christian view of the man as accurately and honestly as any biography of Lincoln or the Emperor William written within a year or two of their deaths has done. As we now think of these two men whom doubtless inquisitive criticism might find to have faults, so the Christians in general and his friend Eusebius in particular thought of the Great Emperor. Compare discussion and literature of the trustworthiness of Eusebius as a historical writer in the Prolegomena of

Dr. McGiffert in this volume.

4. *Value of the Work*

That the work on any basis but the untenable one of out-and-out forgery should be characterized as "worthless" or "a mere romance" or "of less value than the heathen panegyrists" is a curious bit of psychological performance, for it does precisely what it grounds its contempt for Eusebius on—suppresses and exaggerates. Taking the minimum residuum of the most penetrating criticism, and the work is yet a source of primary value for understanding the man Constantine. This residuum includes (1) The documents which the work contains. These amount at the very least estimate to more than one-fourth of the whole matter, and the appended oration of Constantine is nearly as much more. (2) Many facts and details where there could be no possibility of motive for falsifying. (3) Much which critical care can draw out of the over-statements of eulogy.

§2. Oration of Constantine.

The *Editions* and *Translations* of this work are substantially identical with those of the Life. See above, under *Life*. The *Authenticity* of the work has been doubted, and its composition ascribed to Eusebius or some other Christian writer, but without sufficient reason. It was appended by Eusebius to his Life of Constantine as specimens of the latter's style. As such it shows a man of some learning, though learning taken at second hand, it is thought, from Lactantius and others. It was composed in Latin, and translated into Greek by the special officials appointed for such work (*V.C.* 4. 32). It was delivered on Good Friday, but in what year or where is not known. It has been placed before the year 324 (Ceiller, 130), but the mention of events and the character of the work itself suggest a considerably later date.

§3. Oration of Eusebius.

The *Editions* and *Translations* of this work are substantially identical with those of the Life, above, but some of the earlier ones do not contain the work. It was delivered in the year 336 (or possibly 335) at Constantinople, in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of Constantine's accession, Constantine himself being present. It gave the emperor lively satisfaction, from which one may safely infer a peculiar taste for combined

panegyric and philosophical theology unless the hypothesis of a double work be true. According to this hypothesis the work consists of two separate orations, spoken perhaps at different times, the first including chapters 1–10, which are panegyrical in character, and the other chapters 11–18, which are theological (compare Lightfoot, Eusebius, p. 343; also McGiffert, Prolegomena, p. 43). It is like the oration of Constantine, a proper part of the Life of Constantine being appended according to his promise in Bk. 4, ch. 46. The special points relating to these works are treated in the notes.

Book I.

The Life of the blessed Emperor Constantine

by

Eusebius Pamphilus.

Chapter I—*Preface—Of the Death of Constantine.*

Already have all mankind united in celebrating with joyous festivities the completion of the second and third decennial period of this great emperor's reign; already have we ourselves received him as a triumphant conqueror in the assembly of God's ministers, and greeted him with the due meed of praise on the twentieth anniversary of his reign; and still more recently we have woven, as it were, garlands of words, wherewith we encircled his sacred head in his own palace on his thirtieth anniversary.

But now, while I desire to give utterance to some of the customary sentiments, I stand perplexed and doubtful which way to turn, being wholly lost in wonder at the extraordinary spectacle before me. For to whatever quarter I direct my view, whether to the east, or to the west, or over the whole world, or toward heaven itself, everywhere and always I see the blessed one yet administering the self-same empire. On earth I behold his sons, like some new reflectors of his brightness, diffusing everywhere the luster of their father's character, and himself still living and powerful, and governing all the affairs of men more completely than ever before, being multiplied in the succession of his children. They had indeed had previously the dignity of Cæsars; but now, being invested with his very self, and graced by his accomplishments, for the excellence of their piety they are proclaimed by the titles of Sovereign, Augustus, Worshipful, and Emperor.

Chapter II—*The Preface Continued.*

And I am indeed amazed, when I consider that he who was but lately visible and present with us in his mortal body, is still, even after death,

when the natural thought disclaims everything superfluous as unsuitable, most marvelously endowed with the same imperial dwellings, and honors, and praises as heretofore. But farther, when I raise my thoughts even to the arch of heaven, and there contemplate his thrice-blessed soul in communion with God himself, freed from every mortal and earthly vesture, and shining in a refulgent robe of light, and when I perceive that it is no more connected with the fleeting periods and occupations of mortal life, but honored with an ever-blooming crown, and an immortality of endless and blessed existence, I stand as it were without power of speech or thought and unable to utter a single phrase, but condemning my own weakness, and imposing silence on myself, I resign the task of speaking his praises worthily to one who is better able, even to him who, being the immortal God and veritable Word, alone has power to confirm his own sayings.

Chapter III—*How God honors Pious Princes, but destroys Tyrants.*

Having given assurance that those who glorify and honor him will meet with an abundant recompense at his hands, while those who set themselves against him as enemies and adversaries will compass the ruin of their own souls, he has already established the truth of these his own declarations, having shown on the one hand the fearful end of those tyrants who denied and opposed him, and at the same time having made it manifest that even the death of his servant, as well as his life, is worthy of admiration and praise, and justly claims the memorial, not merely of perishable, but of immortal monuments.

Mankind, devising some consolation for the frail and precarious duration of human life, have thought by the erection of monuments to glorify the memories of their ancestors with immortal honors. Some have employed the vivid delineations and colors of painting; some have carved statues from lifeless blocks of wood; while others, by engraving their inscriptions deep on tablets and monuments, have thought to transmit the virtues of those whom they honored to perpetual remembrance. All these indeed are perishable, and consumed by the lapse of time, being representations of the corruptible body, and not expressing the image of the immortal soul. And yet these seemed sufficient to those who had no well-

grounded hope of happiness after the termination of this mortal life. But God, that God, I say, who is the common Saviour of all, having treasured up with himself, for those who love godliness, greater blessings than human thought has conceived, gives the earnest and first-fruits of future rewards even here, assuring in some sort immortal hopes to mortal eyes. The ancient oracles of the prophets, delivered to us in the Scripture, declare this; the lives of pious men, who shone in old time with every virtue, bear witness to posterity of the same; and our own days prove it to be true, wherein Constantine, who alone of all that ever wielded the Roman power was the friend of God the Sovereign of all, has appeared to all mankind so clear an example of a godly life.

Chapter IV—*That God honored Constantine.*

And God himself, whom Constantine worshiped, has confirmed this truth by the clearest manifestations of his will, being present to aid him at the commencement, during the course, and at the end of his reign, and holding him up to the human race as an instructive example of godliness. Accordingly, by the manifold blessings he has conferred on him, he has distinguished him alone of all the sovereigns of whom we have ever heard as at once a mighty luminary and most clear-voiced herald of genuine piety.

Chapter V—*That he reigned above Thirty Years, and lived above Sixty.*

With respect to the duration of his reign, God honored him with three complete periods of ten years, and something more, extending the whole term of his mortal life to twice this number of years. And being pleased to make him a representative of his own sovereign power, he displayed him as the conqueror of the whole race of tyrants, and the destroyer of those God-defying giants of the earth who madly raised their impious arms against him, the supreme King of all. They appeared, so to speak, for an instant, and then disappeared; while the one and only true God, when he had enabled his servant, clad in heavenly panoply, to stand singly against many foes, and by his means had relieved mankind from the multitude of the ungodly, constituted him a teacher of his worship to all nations, to testify with a loud voice in the hearing of all that he acknowledged the true God, and turned

with abhorrence from the error of them that are no gods.

Chapter VI—*That he was the Servant of God, and the Conqueror of Nations.*

Thus, like a faithful and good servant, did he act and testify, openly declaring and confessing himself the obedient minister of the supreme King. And God forthwith rewarded him, by making him ruler and sovereign, and victorious to such a degree that he alone of all rulers pursued a continual course of conquest, unsubdued and invincible, and through his trophies a greater ruler than tradition records ever to have been before. So dear was he to God, and so blessed; so pious and so fortunate in all that he undertook, that with the greatest facility he obtained the authority over more nations than any who had preceded him, and yet retained his power, undisturbed, to the very close of his life.

Chapter VII—*Comparison with Cyrus, King of the Persians, and with Alexander of Macedon.*

Ancient history describes Cyrus, king of the Persians, as by far the most illustrious of all kings up to his time. And yet if we regard the end of his days, we find it but little corresponded with his past prosperity, since he met with an inglorious and dishonorable death at the hands of a woman.

Again, the sons of Greece celebrate Alexander the Macedonian as the conqueror of many and diverse nations; yet we find that he was removed by an early death, before he had reached maturity, being carried off by the effects of revelry and drunkenness. His whole life embraced but the space of thirty-two years, and his reign extended to no more than a third part of that period. Unsparing as the thunderbolt, he advanced through streams of blood and reduced entire nations and cities, young and old, to utter slavery. But when he had scarcely arrived at the maturity of life, and was lamenting the loss of youthful pleasures, death fell upon him with terrible stroke, and, that he might not longer outrage the human race, cut him off in a foreign and hostile land, childless, without successor, and homeless. His kingdom too was instantly dismembered, each of his officers taking

away and appropriating a portion for himself. And yet this man is extolled for such deeds as these.

Chapter VIII—*That he conquered nearly the Whole World.*

But our emperor began his reign at the time of life at which the Macedonian died, yet doubled the length of his life, and trebled the length of his reign. And instructing his army in the mild and sober precepts of godliness, he carried his arms as far as the Britons, and the nations that dwell in the very bosom of the Western ocean. He subdued likewise all Scythia, though situated in the remotest North, and divided into numberless diverse and barbarous tribes. He even pushed his conquests to the Blemmyans and Ethiopians, on the very confines of the South; nor did he think the acquisition of the Eastern nations unworthy his care. In short, diffusing the effulgence of his holy light to the ends of the whole world, even to the most distant Indians, the nations dwelling on the extreme circumference of the inhabited earth, he received the submission of all the rulers, governors, and satraps of barbarous nations, who cheerfully welcomed and saluted him, sending embassies and presents, and setting the highest value on his acquaintance and friendship; insomuch that they honored him with pictures and statues in their respective countries, and Constantine alone of all emperors was acknowledged and celebrated by all. Notwithstanding, even among these distant nations, he proclaimed the name of his God in his royal edicts with all boldness.

Chapter IX—*That he was the Son of a Pious Emperor, and bequeathed the Power to Royal Sons.*

Nor did he give this testimony in words merely, while exhibiting failure in his own practice, but pursued every path of virtue, and was rich in the varied fruits of godliness. He ensured the affection of his friends by magnificent proofs of liberality; and inasmuch as he governed on principles of humanity, he caused his rule to be but lightly felt and acceptable to all classes of his subjects; until at last, after a long course of years, and when he was wearied by his divine labors, the God whom he honored crowned him with an immortal reward, and translated him from a transitory

kingdom to that endless life which he has laid up in store for the souls of his saints, after he had raised him up three sons to succeed him in his power. As then the imperial throne had descended to him from his father, so, by the law of nature, was it reserved for his children and their descendants, and perpetuated, like some paternal inheritance, to endless generations. And indeed God himself, who distinguished this blessed prince with divine honors while yet present with us, and who has adorned his death with choice blessings from his own hand, should be the writer of his actions; since he has recorded his labors and successes on heavenly monuments.

Chapter X—*Of the Need for this History, and its Value for Edification.*

However, hard as it is to speak worthily of this blessed character, and though silence were the safer and less perilous course, nevertheless it is incumbent on me, if I would escape the charge of negligence and sloth, to trace as it were a verbal portraiture, by way of memorial of the pious prince, in imitation of the delineations of human art. For I should be ashamed of myself were I not to employ my best efforts, feeble though they be and of little value, in praise of one who honored God with such surpassing devotion. I think too that my work will be on other grounds both instructive and necessary, since it will contain a description of those royal and noble actions which are pleasing to God, the Sovereign of all. For would it not be disgraceful that the memory of Nero, and other impious and godless tyrants far worse than he, should meet with diligent writers to embellish the relation of their worthless deeds with elegant language, and record them in voluminous histories, and that I should be silent, to whom God himself has vouchsafed such an emperor as all history records not, and has permitted me to come into his presence, and enjoy his acquaintance and society?

Wherefore, if it is the duty of any one, it certainly is mine, to make an ample proclamation of his virtues to all in whom the example of noble actions is capable of inspiring the love of God. For some who have written the lives of worthless characters, and the history of actions but little tending to the improvement of morals, from private motives, either love or enmity, and possibly in some cases with no better object than the display of their own learning, have exaggerated unduly their description of actions

intrinsically base, by a refinement and elegance of diction. And thus they have become to those who by the Divine favor had been kept apart from evil, teachers not of good, but of what should be silenced in oblivion and darkness. But my narrative, however unequal to the greatness of the deeds it has to describe, will yet derive luster even from the bare relation of noble actions. And surely the record of conduct that has been pleasing to God will afford a far from unprofitable, indeed a most instructive study, to persons of well-disposed minds.

Chapter XI—*That his Present Object is to record only the Pious Actions of Constantine.*

It is my intention, therefore, to pass over the greater part of the royal deeds of this thrice-blessed prince; as, for example, his conflicts and engagements in the field, his personal valor, his victories and successes against the enemy, and the many triumphs he obtained; likewise his provisions for the interests of individuals, his legislative enactments for the social advantage of his subjects, and a multitude of other imperial labors which are fresh in the memory of all; the design of my present undertaking being to speak and write of those circumstances only which have reference to his religious character.

And since these are themselves of almost infinite variety, I shall select from the facts which have come to my knowledge such as are most suitable, and worthy of lasting record, and endeavor to narrate them as briefly as possible. Henceforward, indeed, there is a full and free opportunity for celebrating in every way the praises of this truly blessed prince, which hitherto we have been unable to do, on the ground that we are forbidden to judge any one blessed before his death, because of the uncertain vicissitudes of life. Let me implore then the help of God, and may the inspiring aid of the heavenly Word be with me, while I commence my history from the very earliest period of his life.

Chapter XII—*That like Moses, he was reared in the Palaces of Kings.*

Ancient history relates that a cruel race of tyrants oppressed the Hebrew nation; and that God, who graciously regarded them in their

affliction, provided that the prophet Moses, who was then an infant, should be brought up in the very palaces and bosoms of the oppressors, and instructed in all the wisdom they possessed. And when in the course of time he had arrived at manhood, and the time was come for Divine justice to avenge the wrongs of the afflicted people, then the prophet of God, in obedience to the will of a more powerful Lord, forsook the royal household, and, estranging himself in word and deed from the tyrants by whom he had been brought up, openly acknowledging his true brethren and kinsfolk. Then God, exalting him to be the leader of the whole nation, delivered the Hebrews from the bondage of their enemies, and inflicted Divine vengeance through his means on the tyrant race. This ancient story, though rejected by most as fabulous, has reached the ears of all. But now the same God has given to us to be eye-witnesses of miracles more wonderful than fables, and, from their recent appearance, more authentic than any report. For the tyrants of our day have ventured to war against the Supreme God, and have sorely afflicted His Church. And in the midst of these, Constantine, who was shortly to become their destroyer, but at that time of tender age, and blooming with the down of early youth, dwelt, as that other servant of God had done, in the very home of the tyrants, but young as he was did not share the manner of life of the ungodly; for from that early period his noble nature, under the leading of the Divine Spirit, inclined him to piety and a life acceptable to God. A desire, moreover, to emulate the example of his father had its influence in stimulating the son to a virtuous course of conduct. His father was Constantius (and we ought to revive his memory at this time), the most illustrious emperor of our age; of whose life it is necessary briefly to relate a few particulars, which tell to the honor of his son.

Chapter XIII—*Of Constantius his Father, who refused to imitate Diocletian, Maximian, and Maxentius*[3]*, in their Persecution of the Christians.*

At a time when four emperors[4] shared the administration of the Roman empire, Constantius alone, following a course of conduct different

[3] The author of the chapter heading means of course Galerius. Maxentius was not emperor until after the death of Constantius.

[4] [Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius—*Bag.*]

from that pursued by his colleagues, entered into the friendship of the Supreme God.

For while they besieged and wasted the churches of God, leveling them to the ground, and obliterating the very foundations of the houses of prayer, he kept his hands pure from their abominable impiety, and never in any respect resembled them. They polluted their provinces by the indiscriminate slaughter of godly men and women; but he kept his soul free from the stain of this crime. They, involved in the mazes of impious idolatry, enthralled first themselves, and then all under their authority, in bondage to the errors of evil demons, while he at the same time originated the profoundest peace throughout his dominions, and secured to his subjects the privilege of celebrating without hindrance the worship of God. In short, while his colleagues oppressed all men by the most grievous exactions, and rendered their lives intolerable, and even worse than death, Constantius alone governed his people with a mild and tranquil sway, and exhibited towards them a truly parental and fostering care. Numberless, indeed, are the other virtues of this man, which are the theme of praise to all; of these I will record one or two instances, as specimens of the quality of those which I must pass by in silence, and then I will proceed to the appointed order of my narrative.

Chapter XIV—*How Constantius his Father, being reproached with Poverty by Diocletian, filled his Treasury, and afterwards restored the Money to those by whom it had been contributed.*

In consequence of the many reports in circulation respecting this prince, describing his kindness and gentleness of character, and the extraordinary elevation of his piety, alleging too, that by reason of his extreme indulgence to his subjects, he had not even a supply of money laid up in his treasury; the emperor who at that time occupied the place of supreme power sent to reprehend his neglect of the public weal, at the same time reproaching him with poverty, and alleging in proof of the charge the empty state of his treasury. On this he desired the messengers of the emperor to remain with him awhile, and, calling together the wealthiest of his subjects of all nations under his dominion, he informed them that he was in want of money, and that this was the time for them all to give a

voluntary proof of their affection for their prince.

As soon as they heard this (as though they had long been desirous of an opportunity for showing the sincerity of their good will), with zealous alacrity they filled the treasury with gold and silver and other wealth; each eager to surpass the rest in the amount of his contribution; and this they did with cheerful and joyous countenances. And now Constantius desired the messengers of the great emperor[5] personally to inspect his treasures, and directed them to give a faithful report of what they had seen; adding, that on the present occasion he had taken this money into his own hands, but that it had long been kept for his use in the custody of the owners, as securely as if under the charge of faithful treasurers. The ambassadors were overwhelmed with astonishment at what they had witnessed; and on their departure it is said that the truly generous prince sent for the owners of the property, and, after commending them severally for their obedience and true loyalty, restored it all, and bade them return to their homes.

This one circumstance, then, conveys a proof of the generosity of him whose character we are attempting to illustrate; another will contain the clearest testimony to his piety.

Chapter XV—*Of the Persecution raised by his Colleagues.*

By command of the supreme authorities of the empire, the governors of the several provinces had set on foot a general persecution of the godly. Indeed, it was from the imperial courts themselves that the very first of the pious martyrs proceeded, who passed through those conflicts for the faith, and most readily endured both fire and sword, and the depths of the sea; every form of death, in short, so that in a brief time all the royal palaces were bereft of pious men. The result was, that the authors of this wickedness were entirely deprived of the protecting care of God, since by

[5] Or the senior Augustus. "Diocletian is thus entitled in the ancient panegyrists and in inscriptions."—*Heinichen.* It was "towards the end of the second century of the Christian era" that there began to be a plurality of *Augusti,* but "from this time we find two or even a greater number of *Augusti;* and though in that and in all similar cases the persons honored with the title were regarded as participators of the imperial power, still the one who received the title first was looked upon as the head of the empire."—Smith, *Dict. Gr. and Rom. Ant.*

their persecution of his worshipers they at the same time silenced the prayers that were wont to be made on their own behalf.

Chapter XVI—*How Constantius, feigning Idolatry, expelled those who consented to offer Sacrifice, but retained in his Palace all who were willing to confess Christ.*

On the other hand, Constantius conceived an expedient full of sagacity, and did a thing which sounds paradoxical, but in fact was most admirable.

He made a proposal to all the officers of his court, including even those in the highest stations of authority, offering them the following alternative; either that they should offer sacrifice to demons, and thus be permitted to remain with him, and enjoy their usual honors; or, in case of refusal, that they should be shut out from all access to his person, and entirely disqualified from acquaintance and association with him. Accordingly, when they had individually made their choice, some one way and some the other; and the choice of each had been ascertained, then this admirable prince disclosed the secret meaning of his expedient, and condemned the cowardice and selfishness of the one party, while he highly commended the other for their conscientious devotion to God. He declared, too, that those who had been false to their God must be unworthy of the confidence of their prince; for how was it possible that they should preserve their fidelity to him, who had proved themselves faithless to a higher power? He determined, therefore, that such persons should be removed altogether from the imperial court, while, on the other hand, declaring that those men who, in bearing witness for the truth, had proved themselves to be worthy servants of God, would manifest the same fidelity to their king, he entrusted them with the guardianship of his person and empire, saying that he was bound to treat such persons with special regard as his nearest and most valued friends, and to esteem them far more highly than the richest treasures.

Chapter XVII—*Of his Christian Manner of Life.*

The father of Constantine, then, is said to have possessed such a character as we have briefly described. And what kind of death was

vouchsafed to him in consequence of such devotion to God, and how far he whom he honored made his lot to differ from that of his colleagues in the empire, may be known to any one who will give his attention to the circumstances of the case. For after he had for a long time given many proofs of royal virtue, in acknowledging the Supreme God alone, and condemning the polytheism of the ungodly, and had fortified his household by the prayers of holy men, he passed the remainder of his life in remarkable repose and tranquility, in the enjoyment of what is counted blessedness—neither molesting others nor being molested ourselves.

Accordingly, during the whole course of his quiet and peaceful reign, he dedicated his entire household, his children, his wife, and domestic attendants, to the One Supreme God; so that the company assembled within the walls of his palace differed in no respect from a church of God; wherein were also to be found his ministers, who offered continual supplications on behalf of their prince, and this at a time when, with most, it was not allowable to have any dealings with the worshipers of God, even so far as to exchange a word with them.

Chapter XVIII—*That after the Abdication of Diocletian and Maximian, Constantius became Chief Augustus, and was blessed with a Numerous Offspring.*

The immediate consequence of this conduct was a recompense from the hand of God, insomuch that he came into the supreme authority of the empire. For the older emperors, for some unknown reason, resigned their power; and this sudden change took place in the first year after their persecution of the churches.[6]

From that time Constantius alone received the honors of chief Augustus, having been previously, indeed, distinguished by the diadem of the imperial Cæsars, among whom he held the first rank; but after his worth had been proved in this capacity, he was invested with the highest dignity of the Roman empire, being named chief Augustus of the four who were afterwards elected to that honor. Moreover, he surpassed most of the

[6] The persecution was in 303 or 304. Compare discussion of date in Clinton, *Fasti Rom.* ann. 303–305. The abdication was in 305.

emperors in regard to the number of his family, having gathered around him a very large circle of children both male and female. And, lastly, when he had attained to a happy old age, and was about to pay the common debt of nature, and exchange this life for another, God once more manifested His power in a special manner on his behalf, by providing that his eldest son Constantine should be present during his last moments, and ready to receive the imperial power from his hands.[7]

Chapter XIX—*Of his Son Constantine, who in his Youth accompanied Diocletian into Palestine.*

The latter had been with his father's imperial colleagues[8] and had passed his life among them, as we have said, like God's ancient prophet. And even in the very earliest period of his youth he was judged by them to be worthy of the highest honor. An instance of this we have ourselves seen, when he passed through Palestine with the senior emperor[9] at whose right hand he stood, and commanded the admiration of all who beheld him by the indications he gave even then of royal greatness. For no one was comparable to him for grace and beauty of person, or height of stature; and he so far surpassed his compeers in personal strength as to be a terror to them. He was, however, even more conspicuous for the excellence of his mental qualities than for his superior physical endowments; being gifted in the first place with a sound judgment, and having also reaped the advantages of a liberal education. He was also distinguished in no ordinary degree both by natural intelligence and divinely imparted wisdom.

Chapter XX—*Flight of Constantine to his Father because of the Plots of Diocletian.*

The emperors then in power, observing his manly and vigorous figure and superior mind, were moved with feelings of jealousy and fear,

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[7] Constantine reached him just before his death, though possibly some weeks before. Compare Prolegomena.

[8] Diocletian and Galerius.

[9] Diocletian. He was on his way to Egypt in the famous campaign against Achilleus in 296–297.

and thenceforward carefully watched for an opportunity of inflicting some brand of disgrace on his character. But the young man, being aware of their designs, the details of which, through the providence of God, more than once came to him, sought safety in flight; in this respect again keeping up his re-semblance to the great prophet Moses. Indeed, in every sense God was his helper; and he had before ordained that he should be present in readiness to succeed his father.

Chapter XXI—*Death of Constantius, who leaves his Son Constantine Emperor.*

Immediately, therefore, on his escape from the plots which had been thus insidiously laid for him, he made his way with all haste to his father, and arrived at length at the very time that he was lying at the point of death[10]. As soon as Constantius saw his son thus unexpectedly in his presence, he leaped from his couch, embraced him tenderly, and, declaring that the only anxiety which had troubled him in the prospect of death, namely, that caused by the absence of his son, was now removed, he rendered thanks to God, saying that he now thought death better than the longest life, and at once completed the arrangement of his private affairs. Then, taking a final leave of the circle of sons and daughters by whom he was surrounded, in his own palace, and on the imperial couch, he bequeathed the empire, according to the law of nature, to his eldest son, and breathed his last.

Chapter XXII—*How, after the Burial of Constantius, Constantine was Proclaimed Augustus by the Army.*

Nor did the imperial throne remain long unoccupied; for Constantine invested himself with his father's purple, and proceeded from his father's palace, presenting to all a renewal, as it were, in his own person, of his father's life and reign. He then conducted the funeral procession in company with his father's friends, some preceding, others following the

[10] This seems to imply that Constantine reached him only after he was sick in bed, i.e. at York in Britain; but other accounts make it probable that he joined him at Boulogne before he sailed on this last expedition to Britain. Compare Prolegomena.

train, and performed the last offices for the pious deceased with an extraordinary degree of magnificence, and all united in honoring this thrice blessed prince with acclamations and praises, and while with one mind and voice, they glorified the rule of the son as a living again of him who was dead, they hastened at once to hail their new sovereign by the titles of Imperial and Worshipful Augustus, with joyful shouts.[11] Thus the memory of the deceased emperor received honor from the praises bestowed upon his son, while the latter was pronounced blessed in being the successor of such a father. All the nations also under his dominion were filled with joy and inexpressible gladness at not being even for a moment deprived of the benefits of a well ordered government.

In the instance of the Emperor Constantius, God has made manifest to our generation what the end of those is who in their lives have honored and loved him.

Chapter XXIII—*A Brief Notice of the Destruction of the Tyrants.*

With respect to the other princes, who made war against the churches of God, I have not thought it fit in the present work to give any account of their downfall, nor to stain the memory of the good by mentioning them in connection with those of an opposite character. The knowledge of the facts themselves will of itself suffice for the wholesome admonition of those who have witnessed or heard of the evils which severally befell them.

Chapter XXIV—*It was by the Will of God that Constantine became possessed of the Empire.*

Thus then the God of all, the Supreme Governor of the whole universe, by his own will appointed Constantine, the descendant of so renowned a parent, to be prince and sovereign; so that, while others have been raised to this distinction by the election of their fellow-men, he is the only one to whose elevation no mortal may boast of having contributed.

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[11] The verdict was not confirmed at once. Galerius refused him the title of emperor, and he contented himself with that of Cæsar for a little. Compare Prolegomena.

Chapter XXV—*Victories of Constantine over the Barbarians and the Britons.*

As soon then as he was established on the throne, he began to care for the interests of his paternal inheritance, and visited with much considerate kindness all those provinces which had previously been under his father's government. Some tribes of the barbarians who dwelt on the banks of the Rhine, and the shores of the Western ocean, having ventured to revolt, he reduced them all to obedience, and brought them from their savage state to one of gentleness. He contented himself with checking the inroads of others, and drove from his dominions, like untamed and savage beasts, those whom he perceived to be altogether incapable of the settled order of civilized life. Having disposed of these affairs to his satisfaction, he directed his attention to other quarters of the world, and first passed over to the British nations, which lie in the very bosom of the ocean. These he reduced to submission, and then proceeded to consider the state of the remaining portions of the empire, that he might be ready to tender his aid wherever circumstances might require it.

Chapter XXVI—*How he resolved to deliver Rome from Maxentius.*

While, therefore, he regarded the entire world as one immense body, and perceived that the head of it all, the royal city of the Roman empire, was bowed down by the weight of a tyrannous oppression; at first he had left the task of liberation to those who governed the other divisions of the empire, as being his superiors in point of age. But when none of these proved able to afford relief, and those who had attempted it had experienced a disastrous termination of their enterprise (Severus and Galerius), he said that life was without enjoyment to him as long as he saw the imperial city thus afflicted, and prepared himself for the overthrowal of the tyranny.

Chapter XXVII—*That after reflecting on the Downfall of those who had worshiped Idols, he made Choice of Christianity.*

Being convinced, however, that he needed some more powerful aid than his military forces could afford him, on account of the wicked and magical enchantments which were so diligently practiced by the tyrant, he sought Divine assistance, deeming the possession of arms and a numerous soldiery of secondary importance, but believing the co-operating power of Deity invincible and not to be shaken. He considered, therefore, on what God he might rely for protection and assistance. While engaged in this enquiry, the thought occurred to him, that, of the many emperors who had preceded him, those who had rested their hopes in a multitude of gods, and served them with sacrifices and offerings, had in the first place been deceived by flattering predictions, and oracles which promised them all prosperity, and at last had met with an unhappy end, while not one of their gods had stood by to warn them of the impending wrath of heaven; while one alone who had pursued an entirely opposite course, who had condemned their error, and honored the one Supreme God during his whole life, had found him to be the Saviour and Protector of his empire, and the Giver of every good thing. Reflecting on this, and well weighing the fact that they who had trusted in many gods had also fallen by manifold forms of death, without leaving behind them either family or offspring, stock, name, or memorial among men; while the God of his father had given to him, on the other hand, manifestations of his power and very many tokens; and considering farther that those who had already taken arms against the tyrant, and had marched to the battle-field under the protection of a multitude of gods, had met with a dishonorable end (for one of them[12] had shamefully retreated from the contest without a blow, and the other[13], being slain in the midst of his own troops, became, as it were, the mere sport of death); reviewing, I say, all these considerations, he judged it to be folly indeed to join in the idle worship of those who were no gods, and, after such convincing evidence, to err from the truth; and therefore felt it incumbent on him to honor his father's God alone.

Chapter XXVIII—*How, while he was praying, God sent him a Vision of a Cross of Light in the Heavens at Mid-day, with an Inscription admonishing*

[12] Galerius

[13] Severus

him to conquer by that.

Accordingly he called on him with earnest prayer and supplications that he would reveal to him who he was, and stretch forth his right hand to help him in his present difficulties. And while he was thus praying with fervent entreaty, a most marvelous sign appeared to him from heaven, the account of which it might have been hard to believe had it been related by any other person. But since the victorious emperor himself long afterwards declared it to the writer of this history, when he was honored with his acquaintance and society, and confirmed his statement by an oath, who could hesitate to accredit the relation, especially since the testimony of after-time has established its truth? He said that about noon, when the day was already beginning to decline, he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription, Conquer by this. At this sight he himself was struck with amazement, and his whole army also, which followed him on this expedition, and witnessed the miracle.

Chapter XXIX—*How the Christ of God appeared to him in his Sleep, and commanded him to use in his Wars a Standard made in the Form of the Cross.*

He said, moreover, that he doubted within himself what the import of this apparition could be. And while he continued to ponder and reason on its meaning, night suddenly came on; then in his sleep the Christ of God appeared to him with the same sign which he had seen in the heavens, and commanded him to make a likeness of that sign which he had seen in the heavens, and to use it as a safeguard in all engagements with his enemies.

Chapter XXX—*The Making of the Standard of the Cross.*

At dawn of day he arose, and communicated the marvel to his friends; and then, calling together the workers in gold and precious stones, he sat in the midst of them, and described to them the figure of the sign he had seen, bidding them represent it in gold and precious stones. And this representation I myself have had an opportunity of seeing.

Chapter XXXI—*A Description of the Standard of the Cross, which the Romans now call the Labarum*[14].

Now it was made in the following manner. A long spear, overlaid with gold, formed the figure of the cross by means of a transverse bar laid over it. On the top of the whole was fixed a wreath of gold and precious stones; and within this, the symbol of the Saviour's name, two letters indicating the name of Christ by means of its initial characters, the letter P being intersected by X in its centre; and these letters the emperor was in the habit of wearing on his helmet at a later period. From the crossbar of the spear was suspended a cloth, a royal piece, covered with a profuse embroidery of most brilliant precious stones; and which, being also richly interlaced with gold, presented an indescribable degree of beauty to the beholder. This banner was of a square form, and the upright staff, whose lower section was of great length, bore a golden half-length portrait of the pious emperor and his children on its upper part, beneath the trophy of the cross, and immediately above the embroidered banner.

The emperor constantly made use of this sign of salvation as a safeguard against every adverse and hostile power, and commanded that others similar to it should be carried at the head of all his armies.

Chapter XXXII—*How Constantine received Instruction, and read the Sacred Scriptures.*

These things were done shortly afterwards. But at the time above specified, being struck with amazement at the extraordinary vision, and resolving to worship no other God save Him who had appeared to him, he sent for those who were acquainted with the mysteries of His doctrines, and enquired who that God was, and what was intended by the sign of the vision he had seen. They affirmed that He was God, the only begotten

[14] [From the Bretagnic *lab,* to raise, or from *labarva,* which, in the Basque language, still signifies a standard—Riddle's *Lat. Dict.* voc. *Labarum.* Gibbon declares the derivation and meaning of the word to be "totally unknown, in spite of the efforts of the critics, who have ineffectually tortured the Latin, Greek, Spanish, Celtic, Teutonic, Illyric, Armenian, &c., in search of an etymology."—*Decline and Fall,* chap. 22, note 33—*Bag.*] Compare the full article of Venables, in Smith and Cheetham, *Dict.* 1 (1880), 908–911, with its references and cuts.

Son of the one and only God; that the sign which had appeared was the symbol of immortality, and the trophy of that victory over death which He had gained in time past when sojourning on earth. They taught him also the causes of His advent, and explained to him the true account of His incarnation. Thus he was instructed in these matters, and was impressed with wonder at the divine manifestation which had been presented to his sight. Comparing, therefore, the heavenly vision with the interpretation given, he found his judgment confirmed; and, in the persuasion that the knowledge of these things had been imparted to him by Divine teaching, he determined thenceforth to devote himself to the reading of the Inspired writings.

Moreover, he made the priests of God his counselors, and deemed it incumbent on him to honor the God who had appeared to him with all devotion. And after this, being fortified by well-grounded hopes in Him, he hastened to quench the threatening fire of tyranny.

Chapter XXXIII—*Of the Adulterous Conduct of Maxentius at Rome.*

For he who had tyrannically possessed himself of the imperial city[15], had proceeded to great lengths in impiety and wickedness, so as to venture without hesitation on every vile and impure action.

For example, he would separate women from their husbands, and after a time send them back to them again, and these insults he offered not to men of mean or obscure condition, but to those who held the first places in the Roman senate. Moreover, though he shamefully dishonored almost numberless free women, he was unable to satisfy his ungoverned and intemperate desires. But when he assayed to corrupt Christian women also, he could no longer secure success to his designs, since they chose rather to submit their lives to death than yield their persons to be defiled by him.

Chapter XXXIV—*How the Wife of a Prefect slew herself for Chastity's Sake.*

Now a certain woman, wife of one of the senators who held the authority of prefect, when she understood that those who ministered to the

[15] Maxentius, made emperor by an uprising of the Prætorian Guards in 306.

tyrant in such matters were standing before her house (she was a Christian), and knew that her husband through fear had bidden them take her and lead her away, begged a short space of time for arraying herself in her usual dress, and entered her chamber. There, being left alone, she sheathed a sword in her own breast, and immediately expired, leaving indeed her dead body to the procurers, but declaring to all mankind, both to present and future generations, by an act which spoke louder than any words, that the chastity for which Christians are famed is the only thing which is invincible and indestructible. Such was the conduct displayed by this woman.

Chapter XXXV—*Massacre of the Roman People by Maxentius.*

All men, therefore, both people and magistrates, whether of high or low degree, trembled through fear of him whose daring wickedness was such as I have described, and were oppressed by his grievous tyranny. Nay, though they submitted quietly, and endured this bitter servitude, still there was no escape from the tyrant's sanguinary cruelty. For at one time, on some trifling pretense, he exposed the populace to be slaughtered by his own body-guard; and countless multitudes of the Roman people were slain in the very midst of the city by the lances and weapons, not of Scythians or barbarians, but of their own fellow-citizens. And besides this, it is impossible to calculate the number of senators whose blood was shed with a view to the seizure of their respective estates, for at different times and on various fictitious charges, multitudes of them suffered death.

Chapter XXXVI—*Magic Arts of Maxentius against Constantine; and Famine at Rome.*

But the crowning point of the tyrant's wickedness was his having recourse to sorcery; sometimes for magic purposes ripping up women with child, at other times searching into the bowels of new-born infants. He slew lions also, and practiced certain horrid arts for evoking demons, and averting the approaching war, hoping by these means to get the victory. In short, it is impossible to describe the manifold acts of oppression by which this tyrant of Rome enslaved his subjects; so that by this time they were

reduced to the most extreme penury and want of necessary food, a scarcity such as our contemporaries do not remember ever before to have existed at Rome.

Chapter XXXVII—*Defeat of Maxentius's Armies in Italy.*

Constantine, however, filled with compassion on account of all these miseries, began to arm himself with all warlike preparation against the tyranny. Assuming therefore the Supreme God as his patron, and invoking His Christ to be his preserver and aid, and setting the victorious trophy, the salutary symbol, in front of his soldiers and body-guard, he marched with his whole forces, trying to obtain again for the Romans the freedom they had inherited from their ancestors.

And whereas, Maxentius, trusting more in his magic arts than in the affection of his subjects, dared not even advance outside the city gates[16], but had guarded every place and district and city subject to his tyranny, with large bodies of soldiers, the emperor, confiding in the help of God, advanced against the first and second and third divisions of the tyrant's forces, defeated them all with ease at the first assault[17], and made his way into the very interior of Italy.

Chapter XXXVIII—*Death of Maxentius on the Bridge of the Tiber*[18].

And already he was approaching very near Rome itself, when, to save him from the necessity of fighting with all the Romans for the tyrant's sake, God himself drew the tyrant, as it were by secret cords, a long way outside the gates[19]. And now those miracles recorded in Holy Writ, which God of

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[16] "Because the soothsayers had foretold that if he went out of it, he should perish." Lact. *De M. P.*

[17] At Sigusium, Turin, Brescia, and Verona.

[18] The Milvian, the present Ponte Molle.

[19] The present Ponte Molle is nearly 2½ kilometers (say 1½ miles) from the Porta del Popolo (at the Mons Pincius). The walls at that time were the ones built by Aurelian, and are substantially the same as the present ones. This Pons Milvius was first built 100 years B.C., and "some part of the first bridge is supposed to remain" (Jenkin, p. 329). Compare Jenkin, art. *Bridges,* in *Enc. Brit.* 4 (1878), 329, for cut and description.

old wrought against the ungodly (discredited by most as fables, yet believed by the faithful), did he in every deed confirm to all alike, believers and unbelievers, who were eye-witnesses of the wonders. For as once in the days of Moses and the Hebrew nation, who were worshipers of God, "Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea and his chosen chariot-captains are drowned in the Red Sea,"—so at this time Maxentius, and the soldiers and guards with him, "went down into the depths like stone," when, in his flight before the divinely-aided forces of Constantine, he essayed to cross the river which lay in his way, over which, making a strong bridge of boats, he had framed an engine of destruction, really against himself, but in the hope of ensnaring thereby him who was beloved by God. For his God stood by the one to protect him, while the other, godless, proved to be the miserable contriver of these secret devices to his own ruin. So that one might well say, "He hath made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violence shall come down upon his own pate." Thus, in the present instance, under divine direction, the machine erected on the bridge, with the ambuscade concealed therein, giving way unexpectedly before the appointed time, the bridge began to sink, and the boats with the men in them went bodily to the bottom. And first the wretch himself, then his armed attendants and guards, even as the sacred oracles had before described, "sank as lead in the mighty waters." So that they who thus obtained victory from God might well, if not in the same words, yet in fact in the same spirit as the people of his great servant Moses, sing and speak as they did concerning the impious tyrant of old: "Let us sing unto the Lord, for he hath been glorified exceedingly; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. He is become my helper and my shield unto salvation." And again, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, marvelous in praises, doing wonders?"

Chapter XXXIX—*Constantine's Entry into Rome.*

Having then at this time sung these and suchlike praises to God, the Ruler of all and the Author of victory, after the example of his great servant Moses, Constantine entered the imperial city in triumph. And here the

whole body of the senate, and others of rank and distinction in the city, freed as it were from the restraint of a prison, along with the whole Roman populace, their countenances expressive of the gladness of their hearts, received him with acclamations and abounding joy; men, women, and children, with countless multitudes of servants, greeting him as deliverer, preserver, and benefactor, with incessant shouts. But he, being possessed of inward piety toward God, was neither rendered arrogant by these plaudits, nor uplifted by the praises he heard; but, being sensible that he had received help from God, he immediately rendered a thanksgiving to him as the Author of his victory.

Chapter XL—*Of the Statue of Constantine holding a Cross, and its Inscription.*

Moreover, by loud proclamation and monumental inscriptions he made known to all men the salutary symbol, setting up this great trophy of victory over his enemies in the midst of the imperial city, and expressly causing it to be engraven in indelible characters, that the salutary symbol was the safeguard of the Roman government and of the entire empire. Accordingly, he immediately ordered a lofty spear in the figure of a cross to be placed beneath the hand of a statue representing himself, in the most frequented part of Rome, and the following inscription to be engraved on it in the Latin language; by virtue of this salutary sign, which is the true test of valor, I have preserved and liberated your city from the yoke of tyranny. I have also set at liberty the roman senate and people, and restored them to their ancient distinction and splendor.

Chapter XLI—*Rejoicings throughout the Provinces; and Constantine's Acts of Grace.*

Thus the pious emperor, glorying in the confession of the victorious cross, proclaimed the Son of God to the Romans with great boldness of testimony. And the inhabitants of the city, one and all, senate and people, reviving, as it were, from the pressure of a bitter and tyrannical domination, seemed to enjoy purer rays of light, and to be born again into a fresh and new life. All the nations, too, as far as the limit of the western

ocean, being set free from the calamities which had heretofore beset them, and gladdened by joyous festivals, ceased not to praise him as the victorious, the pious, the common benefactor; all, indeed, with one voice and one mouth, declared that Constantine had appeared by the grace of God as a general blessing to mankind. The imperial edict also was everywhere published, whereby those who had been wrongfully deprived of their estates were permitted again to enjoy their own, while those who had unjustly suffered exile were recalled to their homes. Moreover, he freed from imprisonment, and from every kind of danger and fear, those who, by reason of the tyrant's cruelty, had been subject to these sufferings.

Chapter XLII—*The Honors Conferred upon Bishops, and the Building of Churches.*

The emperor also personally inviting the society of God's ministers, distinguished them with the highest possible respect and honor, showing them favor in deed and word as persons consecrated to the service of his God. Accordingly, they were admitted to his table, though mean in their attire and outward appearance; yet not so in his estimation, since he thought he saw not the man as seen by the vulgar eye, but the God in him. He made them also his companions in travel, believing that He whose servants they were would thus help him. Besides this, he gave from his own private resources costly benefactions to the churches of God, both enlarging and heightening the sacred edifices, and embellishing the august sanctuaries[20] of the church with abundant offerings.

Chapter XLIII—*Constantine's Liberality to the Poor.*

He likewise distributed money largely to those who were in need, and besides these showing himself philanthropist and benefactor even to the heathen, who had no claim on him; and even for the beggars in the

[20] Variously rendered, but seems to say that the smaller buildings were enlarged and the larger ones enriched. The number of buildings which Constantine is claimed to have erected in Rome alone is prodigious. One meets at every turn in the modern city churches which were, it is said, founded or remodeled by him. For interesting monograph which claims to have established the Constantinian foundation of many of these.

forum, miserable and shiftless, he provided, not with money only, or necessary food, but also decent clothing. But in the case of those who had once been prosperous, and had experienced a reverse of circumstances, his aid was still more lavishly bestowed. On such persons, in a truly royal spirit, he conferred magnificent benefactions; giving grants of land to some, and honoring others with various dignities. Orphans of the unfortunate he cared for as a father, while he relieved the destitution of widows, and cared for them with special solicitude. Nay, he even gave virgins, left unprotected by their parents' death, in marriage to wealthy men with whom he was personally acquainted. But this he did after first bestowing on the brides such portions as it was fitting they should bring to the communion of marriage. In short, as the sun, when he rises upon the earth, liberally imparts his rays of light to all, so did Constantine, proceeding at early dawn from the imperial palace, and rising as it were with the heavenly luminary, impart the rays of his own beneficence to all who came into his presence. It was scarcely possible to be near him without receiving some benefit, nor did it ever happen that any who had expected to obtain his assistance were disappointed in their hope.

Chapter XLIV—*How he was present at the Synods of Bishops.*

Such, then, was his general character towards all. But he exercised a peculiar care over the church of God; and whereas, in the several provinces there were some who differed from each other in judgment, he, like some general bishop constituted by God, convened synods of his ministers. Nor did he disdain to be present and sit with them in their assembly, but bore a share in their deliberations, ministering to all that pertained to the peace of God. He took his seat, too, in the midst of them, as an individual amongst many, dismissing his guards and soldiers, and all whose duty it was to defend his person; but protected by the fear of God, and surrounded by the guardianship of his faithful friends. Those whom he saw inclined to a sound judgment, and exhibiting a calm and conciliatory temper, received his high approbation, for he evidently delighted in a general harmony of sentiment; while he regarded the unyielding wills with aversion.

Chapter XLV—*His Forbearance with Unreasonable Men.*

Moreover he endured with patience some who were exasperated against himself, directing them in mild and gentle terms to control themselves, and not be turbulent. And some of these respected his admonitions, and desisted; but as to those who proved incapable of sound judgment, he left them entirely at the disposal of God, and never himself desired harsh measures against any one. Hence it naturally happened that the disaffected in Africa reached such a pitch of violence as even to venture on overt acts of audacity; some evil spirit, as it seems probable, being jealous of the present great prosperity, and impelling these men to atrocious deeds, that he might excite the emperor's anger against them. He gained nothing, however, by this malicious conduct; for the emperor laughed at these proceedings, and declared their origin to be from the evil one; inasmuch as these were not the actions of sober persons, but of lunatics or demoniacs; who should be pitied rather than punished; since to punish madmen is as great folly as to sympathize with their condition is supreme philanthropy.

Chapter XLVI—*Victories over the Barbarians.*

Thus the emperor in all his actions honored God, the Controller of all things, and exercised an unwearied oversight over His churches. And God requited him, by subduing all barbarous nations under his feet, so that he was able everywhere to raise trophies over his enemies; and He proclaimed him as conqueror to all mankind, and made him a terror to his adversaries; not indeed that this was his natural character, since he was rather the meekest, and gentlest, and most benevolent of men.

Chapter XLVII—*Death of Maximin*[21]*,who had attempted a Conspiracy, and of Others whom Constantine detected by Divine Revelation.*

While he was thus engaged, the second of those who had resigned the

[21] There is long discussion of whether Maximian or Maximin is intended. To any one who compares the order of narration in the *Church History,* 9. 9, 11, the discussion will seem idle, though it is curious that the one most jealous and greedy of power should have been mistaken for one of the abdicators. It seems as if there had been some confusion in the mind of Eusebius himself.

throne, being detected in a treasonable conspiracy, suffered a most ignominious death. He was the first whose pictures, statues, and all similar marks of honor and distinction were everywhere destroyed, on the ground of his crimes and impiety. After him others also of the same family were discovered in the act of forming secret plots against the emperor; all their intentions being miraculously revealed by God through visions to His servant.

For he frequently vouchsafed to him manifestations of himself, the Divine presence appearing to him in a most marvelous manner, and according to him manifold intimations of future events. Indeed, it is impossible to express in words the indescribable wonders of Divine grace which God was pleased to vouchsafe to His servant. Surrounded by these, he passed the rest of his life in security, rejoicing in the affection of his subjects, rejoicing too because he saw all beneath his government leading contented lives; but above all delighted at the flourishing condition of the churches of God.

Chapter XLVIII—*Celebration of Constantine's Decennalia.*

While he was thus circumstanced, he completed the tenth year of his reign. On this occasion he ordered the celebration of general festivals, and offered prayers of thanksgiving to God, the King of all, as sacrifices without flame or smoke. And from this employment he derived much pleasure; not so from the tidings he received of the ravages committed in the Eastern provinces.

Chapter XLIX—*How Licinius oppressed the East.*

For he was informed that in that quarter a certain savage beast was besetting both the church of God and the other inhabitants of the provinces, owing, as it were, to the efforts of the evil spirit to produce effects quite contrary to the deeds of the pious emperor; so that the Roman empire, divided into two parts, seemed to all men to resemble night and day; since darkness overspread the provinces of the East, while the brightest day illumined the inhabitants of the other portion. And whereas the latter were receiving manifold blessings at the hand of God, the sight of these blessings proved intolerable to that envy which hates all good, as well

as to the tyrant who afflicted the other division of the empire; and who, notwithstanding that his government was prospering, and he had been honored by a marriage connection[22] with so great an emperor as Constantine, yet cared not to follow the steps of that pious prince, but strove rather to imitate the evil purposes and practice of the impious; and chose to adopt the course of those whose ignominious end he had seen with his own eyes, rather than to maintain amicable relations with him who was his superior.

Chapter L—*How Licinius attempted a Conspiracy against Constantine.*

Accordingly he engaged in an implacable war against his benefactor, altogether regardless of the laws of friendship, the obligation of oaths, the ties of kindred, and already existing treaties. For the most benignant emperor had given him a proof of sincere affection in bestowing on him the hand of his sister, thus granting him the privilege of a place in family relationship and his own ancient imperial descent, and investing him also with the rank and dignity of his colleague in the empire. But the other took the very opposite course, employing himself in machinations against his superior, and devising various means to repay his benefactor with injuries. At first, pretending friendship, he did all things by guile and treachery, expecting thus to succeed in concealing his designs; but God enabled his servant to detect the schemes thus devised in darkness. Being discovered, however, in his first attempts, he had recourse to fresh frauds; at one time pretending friendship, at another claiming the protection of solemn treaties. Then suddenly violating every engagement, and again beseeching pardon by embassies, yet after all shamefully violating his word, he at last declared open war, and with desperate infatuation resolved thenceforward to carry arms against God himself, whose worshiper he knew the emperor to be.

Chapter LI—*Intrigues of Licinius against the Bishops, and his Prohibition of Synods.*

[22] Licinius married in 313 Constantia, sister of Constantine.

And at first he made secret enquiry respecting the ministers of God subject to his dominion, who had never, indeed, in any respect offended against his government, in order to bring false accusations against them. And when he found no ground of accusation, and had no real ground of objection against them, he next enacted a law, to the effect that the bishops should never on any account hold communication with each other, nor should any one of them absent himself on a visit to a neighboring church; nor, lastly, should the holding of synods, or councils for the consideration of affairs of common interest, be permitted. Now this was clearly a pretext for displaying his malice against us. For we were compelled either to violate the law, and thus be amenable to punishment, or else, by compliance with its injunctions, to nullify the statutes of the Church; inasmuch as it is impossible to bring important questions to a satisfactory adjustment, except by means of synods. In other cases also this God-hater, being determined to act contrary to the God-loving prince, enacted such things. For whereas the one assembled the priests of God in order to honor them, and to promote peace and unity of judgment; the other, whose object it was to destroy everything that was good, used all his endeavors to destroy the general harmony.

Chapter LII—*Banishment of the Christians, and Confiscation of their Property.*

And whereas Constantine, the friend of God, had granted to His worshipers freedom of access to the imperial palaces; this enemy of God, in a spirit the very reverse of this, expelled thence all Christians subject to his authority. He banished those who had proved themselves his most faithful and devoted servants, and compelled others, on whom he had himself conferred honor and distinction as a reward for their former eminent services, to the performance of menial offices as slaves to others; and at length, being bent on seizing the property of all as a windfall for himself, he even threatened with death those who professed the Saviour's name. Moreover, being himself of a nature hopelessly debased by sensuality, and degraded by the continual practice of adultery and other shameless vices, he assumed his own worthless character as a specimen of human nature generally, and denied that the virtue of chastity and continence existed

among men.

Chapter LIII—*Edict that Women should not meet with the Men in the Churches.*

Accordingly he passed a second law, which enjoined that men should not appear in company with women in the houses of prayer, and forbade women to attend the sacred schools of virtue, or to receive instruction from the bishops, directing the appointment of women to be teachers of their own sex. These regulations being received with general ridicule, he devised other means for effecting the ruin of the churches. He ordered that the usual congregations of the people should be held in the open country outside the gates, alleging that the open air without the city was far more suitable for a multitude than the houses of prayer within the walls.

Chapter LIV—*That those who refuse to sacrifice are to be dismissed from Military Service, and those in Prison not to be fed.*

Failing, however, to obtain obedience in this respect also, at length he threw off the mask, and gave orders that those who held military commissions in the several cities of the empire should be deprived of their respective commands, in case of their refusal to offer sacrifices to the demons. Accordingly the forces of the authorities in every province suffered the loss of those who worshiped God; and he too who had decreed this order suffered loss, in that he thus deprived himself of the prayers of pious men. And why should I still further mention how he directed that no one should obey the dictates of common humanity by distributing food to those who were pining in prisons, or should even pity the captives who perished with hunger; in short, that no one should perform a virtuous action, and that those whose natural feelings impelled them to sympathize with their fellow-creatures should be prohibited from doing them a single kindness? Truly this was the most utterly shameless and scandalous of all laws, and one which surpassed the worst depravity of human nature; a law which inflicted on those who showed mercy the same penalties as on those who were the objects of their compassion, and visited the exercise of mere humanity with the severest punishments.

Chapter LV—*The Lawless Conduct and Covetousness of Licinius.*

Such were the ordinances of Licinius. But why should I enumerate his innovations respecting marriage, or those concerning the dying, whereby he presumed to abrogate the ancient and wisely established laws of the Romans, and to introduce certain barbarous and cruel institutions in their stead, inventing a thousand pretenses for oppressing his subjects? Hence it was that he devised a new method of measuring land, by which he reckoned the smallest portion at more than its actual dimensions, from an insatiable desire of acquisition. Hence too he registered the names of country residents who were now no more, and had long been numbered with the dead, procuring to himself by this expedient a shameful gain. His meanness was unlimited and his rapacity insatiable. So that when he had filled all his treasuries with gold, and silver, and boundless wealth, he bitterly bewailed his poverty, and suffered as it were the torments of Tantalus. But why should I mention how many innocent persons he punished with exile; how much property he confiscated; how many men of noble birth and estimable character he imprisoned, whose wives he handed over to be basely insulted by his profligate slaves, and to how many married women and virgins he himself offered violence, though already feeling the infirmities of age? I need not enlarge on these subjects, since the enormity of his last actions causes the former to appear trifling and of little moment.

Chapter LVI—*At length he undertakes to raise a Persecution.*

For the final efforts of his fury appeared in his open hostility to the churches, and he directed his attacks against the bishops themselves, whom he regarded as his worst adversaries, bearing special enmity to those men whom the great and pious emperor treated as his friends. Accordingly he spent on us the utmost of his fury, and, being transported beyond the bounds of reason, he paused not to reflect on the example of those who had persecuted the Christians before him, nor of those whom he himself had been raised up to punish and destroy for their impious deeds; nor did he heed the facts of which he had been himself a witness, though he had seen

with his own eyes the chief originator of these our calamities (whoever he was), smitten by the stroke of the Divine scourge.

Chapter LVII—*That Maximian, brought Low by a Fistulous Ulcer with Worms, issued an Edict in Favor of the Christians.*

For whereas this man had commenced the attack on the churches, and had been the first to pollute his soul with the blood of just and godly men, a judgment from God overtook him, which at first affected his body, but eventually extended itself to his soul. For suddenly an abscess appeared in the secret parts of his person, followed by a deeply seated fistulous ulcer; and these diseases fastened with incurable virulence on the intestines, which swarmed with a vast multitude of worms, and emitted a pestilential odor. Besides, his entire person had become loaded, through gluttonous excess, with an enormous quantity of fat, and this, being now in a putrescent state, is said to have presented to all who approached him an intolerable and dreadful spectacle. Having, therefore, to struggle against such sufferings, at length, though late, he came to a realization of his past crimes against the Church; and, confessing his sins before God, he put a stop to the persecution of the Christians, and hastened to issue imperial edicts and rescripts for the rebuilding of their churches, at the same time enjoining them to perform their customary worship, and to offer up prayers on his behalf.

Chapter LVIII—*That Maximin, who had persecuted the Christians, was compelled to fly, and conceal himself in the Disguise of a Slave.*

Such was the punishment which he underwent who had commenced the persecution. He[23], however, of whom we are now speaking, who had been a witness of these things, and known them by his own actual experience, all at once banished the remembrance of them from his mind, and reflected neither on the punishment of the first, nor the divine judgment which had been executed on the second persecutor[24]. The latter had indeed endeavored to outstrip his predecessor in the career of

[23] Licinius.

[24] [Maximin, ruler of the Eastern provinces of the empire—*Bag.*]

crime, and prided himself on the invention of new tortures for us. Fire nor sword, nor piercing with nails, nor yet wild beasts or the depths of the sea sufficed him. In addition to all these, he discovered a new mode of punishment, and issued an edict directing that their eyesight should be destroyed. So that numbers, not of men only, but of women and children, after being deprived of the sight of their eyes, and the use of the joints of their feet, by mutilation or cauterization, were consigned in this condition to the painful labor of the mines. Hence it was that this tyrant also was overtaken not long after by the righteous judgment of God, at a time when, confiding in the aid of the demons whom he worshiped as gods, and relying on the countless multitudes of his troops, he had ventured to engage in battle. For, feeling himself on that occasion destitute of all hope in God, he threw from him the imperial dress which so ill became him, hid himself with unmanly timidity in the crowd around him, and sought safety in flight.

He afterwards lurked about the fields and villages in the habit of a slave, hoping he should thus be effectually concealed. He had not, however, eluded the mighty and all-searching eye of God; for even while he was expecting to pass the residue of his days in security, he fell prostrate, smitten by God's fiery dart, and his whole body consumed by the stroke of Divine vengeance; so that all trace of the original lineaments of his person was lost, and nothing remained to him but dry bones and a skeleton-like appearance.

Chapter LIX—*That Maximin, blinded by Disease, issued an Edict in Favor of the Christians.*

And still the stroke of God continued heavy upon him, so that his eyes protruded and fell from their sockets, leaving him quite blind; and thus he suffered, by a most righteous retribution, the very same punishment which he had been the first to devise for the martyrs of God. At length, however, surviving even these sufferings, he too implored pardon of the God of the Christians, and confessed his impious fighting against God; he too recanted, as the former persecutor had done; and by laws and ordinances explicitly acknowledged his error in worshiping those whom he had accounted gods, declaring that he now knew, by positive experience, that the God of the Christians was the only true God. These were facts which

Licinius had not merely received on the testimony of others, but of which he had himself had personal knowledge; and yet, as though his understanding had been obscured by some dark cloud of error, persisted in the same evil course.

Book II.

Chapter I—*Secret Persecution by Licinius, who causes Some Bishops to be put to Death at Amasia of Pontus.*

In this manner, he of whom we have spoken continued to rush headlong towards that destruction which awaits the enemies of God; and once more, with a fatal emulation of their example whose ruin he had himself witnessed as the consequence of their impious conduct, he re-kindled the persecution of the Christians, like a long-extinguished fire, and fanned the unhallowed flame to a fiercer height than any who had gone before him.

At first, indeed, though breathing fury and threatenings against God, like some savage beast of prey, or some crooked and wriggling serpent, he dared not, from fear of Constantine, openly level his attacks against the churches of God subject to his dominion; but dissembled the virulence of his malice, and endeavored by secret and limited measures to compass the death of the bishops, the most eminent of whom he found means to remove, through charges laid against them by the governors of the several provinces. And the manner in which they suffered had in it something strange, and hitherto unheard of. At all events, the barbarities perpetrated at Amasia of Pontus surpassed every known excess of cruelty.

Chapter II—*Demolition of Churches, and Butchery of the Bishops.*

For in that city some of the churches, for the second time since the commencement of the persecutions, were leveled with the ground, and others were closed by the governors of the several districts, in order to prevent any who frequented them from assembling together, or rendering due worship to God. For he by whose orders these outrages were committed was too conscious of his own crimes to expect that these services were performed with any view to his benefit, and was convinced that all we did, and all our endeavors to obtain the favor of God, were on Constantine's behalf.

These servile governors then, feeling assured that such a course would be pleasing to the impious tyrant, subjected the most distinguished prelates of the churches to capital punishment. Accordingly, men who had been guilty of no crime were led away, without cause punished like murderers; and some suffered a new kind of death, having their bodies cut piecemeal; and, after this cruel punishment, more horrible than any named in tragedy, being cast, as a food to fishes, into the depths of the sea. The result of these horrors was again, as before, the flight of pious men, and once more the fields and deserts received the worshipers of God. The tyrant, having thus far succeeded in his object, he farther determined to raise a general persecution of the Christians; and he would have accomplished his purpose, nor could anything have hindered him from carrying his resolution into effect, had not he who defends his own anticipated the coming evil, and by his special guidance conducted his servant Constantine to this part of the empire, causing him to shine forth as a brilliant light in the midst of the darkness and gloomy night.

Chapter III—*How Constantine was stirred in Behalf of the Christians thus in Danger of Persecution.*

He, perceiving the evils of which he had heard to be no longer tolerable, took wise counsel, and tempering the natural clemency of his character with a certain measure of severity, hastened to succor those who were thus grievously oppressed. For he judged that it would rightly be deemed a pious and holy task to secure, by the removal of an individual, the safety of the greater part of the human race. He judged too, that if he listened to the dictates of clemency only, and bestowed his pity on one utterly unworthy of it, this would, on the one hand, confer no real benefit on a man whom nothing would induce to abandon his evil practices, and whose fury against his subjects would only be likely to increase; while, on the other hand, those who suffered from his oppression would thus be forever deprived of all hope of deliverance.

Influenced by these reflections, the emperor resolved without farther delay to extend a protecting hand to those who had fallen into such an extremity of distress. He accordingly made the usual warlike preparations, and assembled his whole forces, both of horse and foot. But before them

all was carried the standard which I have before described, as the symbol of his full confidence in God.

Chapter IV—*That Constantine prepared himself for the War by Prayer; Licinius by the Practice of Divination.*

He took with him also the priests of God, feeling well assured that now, if ever, he stood in need of the efficacy of prayer, and thinking it right that they should constantly be near and about his person, as most trusty guardians of the soul.

Now, as soon as the tyrant understood that Constantine's victories over his enemies were secured to him by no other means than the cooperation of God, and that the persons above alluded to were continually with him and about his person; and besides this, that the symbol of the salutary passion preceded both the emperor himself and his whole army; he regarded these precautions with ridicule (as might be expected), at the same time mocking and reviling the emperor with blasphemous words.

On the other hand, he gathered round himself Egyptian diviners and soothsayers, with sorcerers and enchanters, and the priests and prophets of those whom he imagined to be gods. He then, after offering the sacrifices which he thought the occasion demanded, enquired how far he might reckon on a successful termination of the war. They replied with one voice, that he would unquestionably be victorious over his enemies, and triumphant in the war; and the oracles everywhere held out to him the same prospect in copious and elegant verses. The soothsayers certified him of favorable omens from the flight of birds; the priests declared the same to be indicated by the motion of the entrails of their victims. Elevated, therefore, by these fallacious assurances, he boldly advanced at the head of his army, and prepared for battle.

Chapter V—*What Licinius, while sacrificing in a Grove, said concerning Idols, and concerning Christ.*

And when he was now ready to engage, he desired the most approved

of his body-guard and his most valued friends to meet him in one of the places which they consider sacred. It was a well-watered and shady grove, and in it were several marble statues of those whom he accounted to be gods. After lighting tapers and performing the usual sacrifices in honor of these, he is said to have delivered the following speech:

"Friends and fellow-soldiers! These are our country's gods, and these we honor with a worship derived from our remotest ancestors. But he who leads the army now opposed to us has proved false to the religion of his forefathers, and adopted atheistic sentiments, honoring in his infatuation some strange and unheard-of Deity, with whose despicable standard he now disgraces his army, and confiding in whose aid he has taken up arms, and is now advancing, not so much against *us* as against those very gods whom he has forsaken. However, the present occasion shall prove which of us is mistaken in his judgment, and shall decide between our gods and those whom our adversaries profess to honor. For either it will declare the victory to be ours, and so most justly evince that our gods are the true saviours and helpers; or else, if this God of Constantine's, who comes we know not whence, shall prove superior to our deities (who are many, and in point of numbers, at least, have the advantage), let no one henceforth doubt which god he ought to worship, but attach himself at once to the superior power, and ascribe to him the honors of the victory. Suppose, then, this strange God, whom we now regard with ridicule, should really prove victorious; then indeed we must acknowledge and give him honor, and so bid a long farewell to those for whom we light our tapers in vain. But if our own gods triumph (as they undoubtedly will), then, as soon as we have secured the present victory, let us prosecute the war without delay against these despisers of the gods."

Such were the words he addressed to those then present, as reported not long after to the writer of this history by some who heard them spoken. And as soon as he had concluded his speech, he gave orders to his forces to commence the attack.

Chapter VI—*An Apparition seen in the Cities subject to Licinius, as of Constantine's Troops passing through them.*

While these things were taking place a supernatural appearance is said to have been observed in the cities subject to the tyrant's rule. Different detachments of Constantine's army seemed to present themselves to the view, marching at noonday through these cities, as though they had obtained the victory. In reality, not a single soldier was anywhere present at the time, and yet this appearance was seen through the agency of a divine and superior power, and foreshadowed what was shortly coming to pass. For as soon as the armies were ready to engage, he who had broken through the ties of friendly alliance[25] was the first to commence the battle; on which Constantine, calling on the name of "God the Supreme Saviour," and giving this as the watchword to his soldiers, overcame him in this first conflict; and not long after in a second battle he gained a still more important and decisive victory, the salutary trophy preceding the ranks of his army.

Chapter VII—*That Victory everywhere followed the Presence of the Standard of the Cross in Battle.*

Indeed, wherever this appeared, the enemy soon fled before his victorious troops. And the emperor perceiving this, whenever he saw any part of his forces hard pressed, gave orders that the salutary trophy should be moved in that direction, like some triumphant charm against disasters; at which the combatants were divinely inspired, as it were, with fresh strength and courage, and immediate victory was the result.

Chapter VIII—*That Fifty Men were selected to carry the Cross.*

Accordingly, he selected those of his bodyguard who were most distinguished for personal strength, valor, and piety, and entrusted them with the sole care and defense of the standard. There were thus no less than fifty men whose only duty was to surround and vigilantly defend the standard, which they carried each in turn on their shoulders. These

[25] [Licinius was suspected of having secretly countenanced Bassianus (who had married Constantine's sister Anastasia, and received the rank of Cæsar) in a treasonable conspiracy. Vide Gibbon, *Decline and Fall,* chap. 14—*Bag.*] Compare Prolegomena, under *Life.*

circumstances were related to the writer of this narrative by the emperor himself in his leisure moments, long after the occurrence of the events; and he added another incident well worthy of being recorded.

Chapter IX—*That One of the Cross-Bearers, who fled from his Post, was slain; while Another, who faithfully stood his Ground, was preserved.*

For he said that once, during the very heat of an engagement, a sudden tumult and panic attacked his army, which threw the soldier who then bore the standard into an agony of fear, so that he handed it over to another, in order to secure his own escape from the battle. As soon, however, as his comrade had received it, and he had withdrawn, and resigned all charge of the standard, he was struck in the belly by a dart, which took his life. Thus he paid the penalty of his cowardice and unfaithfulness, and lay dead on the spot; but the other, who had taken his place as the bearer of the salutary standard, found it to be the safeguard of his life. For though he was assailed by a continual shower of darts, the bearer remained unhurt, the staff of the standard receiving every weapon. It was indeed a truly marvelous circumstance, that the enemies' darts all fell within and remained in the slender circumference of this spear, and thus saved the standard-bearer from death; so that none of those engaged in this service ever received a wound.

This story is none of mine, but for this, too, I am indebted to the emperor's own authority, who related it in my hearing along with other matters. And now, having thus through the power of God secured these first victories, he put his forces in motion and continued his onward march.

Chapter X—*Various Battles, and Constantine's Victories.*

The van, however, of the enemy, unable to resist the emperor's first assault, threw down their arms, and prostrated themselves at his feet. All these he spared, rejoicing to save human life. But there were others who still continued in arms, and engaged in battle. These the emperor endeavored to conciliate by friendly overtures, but when these were not accepted he ordered his army to commence the attack. On this they immediately

turned and betook themselves to flight; and some were overtaken and slain according to the laws of war, while others fell on each other in the confusion of their flight, and perished by the swords of their comrades.

Chapter XI—*Flight, and Magic Arts of Licinius.*

In these circumstances their commander, finding himself bereft of the aid of his followers, having lost his lately numerous array, both of regular and allied forces, having proved, too, by experience, how vain his confidence had been in those whom he thought to be gods, ignominiously took to flight, by which indeed he effected his escape, and secured his personal safety, for the pious emperor had forbidden his soldiers to follow him too closely, and thus allowed him an opportunity for escape. And this he did in the hope that he might hereafter, on conviction of the desperate state of his affairs, be induced to abandon his insane and presumptuous ambition, and return to sounder reason. So Constantine, in his excessive humanity, thought and was willing patiently to bear past injuries, and extend his forgiveness to one who so ill deserved it; but Licinius, far from renouncing his evil practices, still added crime to crime, and ventured on more daring atrocities than ever. Nay, once more tampering with the detestable arts of magic, he again was presumptuous; so that it might well be said of him, as it was of the Egyptian tyrant of old, that God had hardened his heart.

Chapter XII—*How Constantine, after praying in his Tabernacle, obtained the Victory.*

But while Licinius, giving himself up to these impieties, rushed blindly towards the gulf of destruction, the emperor on the other hand, when he saw that he must meet his enemies in a second battle, devoted the intervening time to his Saviour. He pitched the tabernacle of the cross outside and at a distance from his camp, and there passed his time in a pure and holy manner, offering up prayers to God; following thus the example of his ancient prophet, of whom the sacred oracles testify, that he pitched the tabernacle without the camp. He was attended only by a few, whose faith and pious devotion he highly esteemed. And this custom he continued to

observe whenever he meditated an engagement with the enemy. For he was deliberate in his measures, the better to insure safety, and desired in everything to be directed by divine counsel. And making earnest supplications to God, he was always honored after a little with a manifestation of his presence. And then, as if moved by a divine impulse, he would rush from the tabernacle, and suddenly give orders to his army to move at once without delay, and on the instant to draw their swords. On this they would immediately commence the attack, fight vigorously, so as with incredible celerity to secure the victory, and raise trophies of victory over their enemies.

Chapter XIII—*His Humane Treatment of Prisoners.*

Thus the emperor and his army had long been accustomed to act, whenever there was a prospect of an engagement; for his God was ever present to his thoughts, and he desired to do everything according to his will, and conscientiously to avoid any wanton sacrifice of human life. He was anxious thus for the preservation not only of his own subjects, but even of his enemies. Accordingly he directed his victorious troops to spare the lives of their prisoners, admonishing them, as human beings, not to forget the claims of their common nature. And whenever he saw the passions of his soldiery excited beyond control, he repressed their fury by a largess of money, rewarding every man who saved the life of an enemy with a certain weight of gold. And the emperor's own sagacity led him to discover this inducement to spare human life, so that great numbers even of the barbarians were thus saved, and owed their lives to the emperor's gold.

Chapter XIV—*A Farther Mention of his Prayers in the Tabernacle.*

Now these, and a thousand such acts as these, were familiarly and habitually done by the emperor. And on the present occasion he retired, as his custom was before battle, to the privacy of his tabernacle, and there employed his time in prayer to God. Meanwhile he strictly abstained from anything like ease, or luxurious living, and disciplined himself by fasting and bodily mortification, imploring the favor of God by supplication and prayer, that he might obtain his concurrence and aid, and be ready to

execute whatever he might be pleased to suggest to his thoughts. In short, he exercised a vigilant care over all alike, and interceded with God as much for the safety of his enemies as for that of his own subjects.

Chapter XV—*Treacherous Friendship, and Idolatrous Practices of Licinius.*

And inasmuch as he who had lately fled before him now dissembled his real sentiments, and again petitioned for a renewal of friendship and alliance, the emperor thought fit, on certain conditions, to grant his request[26], in the hope that such a measure might be expedient, and generally advantageous to the community. Licinius, however, while he pretended a ready submission to the terms prescribed, and attested his sincerity by oaths, at this very time was secretly engaged in collecting a military force, and again meditated war and strife, inviting even the barbarians to join his standard[27], and he began also to look about him for other gods, having been deceived by those in whom he had hitherto trusted. And, without bestowing a thought on what he had himself publicly spoken on the subject of false deities, or choosing to acknowledge that God who had fought on the side of Constantine, he made himself ridiculous by seeking for a multitude of new gods.

Chapter XVI—*How Licinius counseled his Soldiers not to attack the*

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[26] ["He consented to leave his rival, or, as he again styled Licinius, his friend and brother, in the possession of Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt; but the provinces of Pannonia, Dalmatia, Dacia, Macedonia, and Greece, were yielded to the Western empire, and the dominions of Constantine now extended from the confines of Caledonia to the extremity of Peloponnesus."—Gibbon, *Decline and Fall,* chap. XIV.—*Bag.*]

[27] [Gibbon (chap. XIV.) says that the reconciliation of Constantine and Licinius maintained, *above eight years,* the tranquillity of the Roman world. If this be true, it may be regarded as one proof that our author's work is rather to be considered as a general sketch of Constantine's life and character than as a minutely correct historical document—*Bag.*] There is either a strange lack of perspective in this account, or else Eusebius omits all account of the first wars with Licinius (314) which resulted in the division of territory mentioned in the above note. This latter view is plausible on comparison with the account in the *Church History.* In this view the conditions referred to above relate to the terms on which Licinius was spared on Constantia's request, and what follows is the explanation of the alleged oath-breaking of Constantine in putting Licinius to death.

Standard of the Cross.

Having now learned by experience the Divine and mysterious power which resided in the salutary trophy, by means of which Constantine's army had become habituated to victory, he admonished his soldiers never to direct their attack against this standard, nor even incautiously to allow their eyes to rest upon it; assuring them that it possessed a terrible power, and was especially hostile to him; so that they would do well carefully to avoid any collision with it. And now, having given these directions, he prepared for a decisive conflict with him whose humanity prompted him still to hesitate, and to postpone the fate which he foresaw awaited his adversary. The enemy, however, confident in the aid of a multitude of gods, advanced to the attack with a powerful array of military force, preceded by certain images of the dead, and lifeless statues, as their defense. On the other side, the emperor, secure in the armor of godliness, opposed to the numbers of the enemy the salutary and life-giving sign, as at once a terror to the foe, and a protection from every harm. And for a while he paused, and preserved at first the attitude of forbearance, from respect to the treaty of peace to which he had given his sanction, that he might not be the first to commence the contest.

Chapter XVII—*Constantine's Victory.*

But as soon as he perceived that his adversaries persisted in their resolution, and were already drawing their swords, he gave free scope to his indignation, and by a single charge overthrew in a moment the entire body of the enemy, thus triumphing at once over them and their gods.

Chapter XVIII—*Death of Licinius, and Celebration of the Event.*

He then proceeded to deal with this adversary of God and his followers according to the laws of war, and consign them to fitting punishment. Accordingly the tyrant himself, and they whose counsels had supported him in his impiety, were together subjected to the just punishment of death. After this, those who had so lately been deceived by their vain confidence in false deities, acknowledged with unfeigned sincerity the God of Constantine, and openly professed their belief in him as the

true and only God.

Chapter XIX—*Rejoicings and Festivities.*

And now, the impious being thus removed, the sun once more shone brightly after the gloomy cloud of tyrannic power. Each separate portion of the Roman dominion became blended with the rest; the Eastern nations united with those of the West, and the whole body of the Roman empire was graced as it were by its head in the person of a single and supreme ruler, whose sole authority pervaded the whole. Now too the bright rays of the light of godliness gladdened the days of those who had heretofore been sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. Past sorrows were no more remembered, for all united in celebrating the praises of the victorious prince, and avowed their recognition of his preserver as the only true God. Thus he whose character shone with all the virtues of piety, the emperor Victor, for he had himself adopted this name as a most fitting appellation to express the victory which God had granted him over all who hated or opposed him, assumed the dominion of the East, and thus singly governed the Roman empire, re-united, as in former times, under one head. Thus, as he was the first to proclaim to all the sole sovereignty of God, so he himself, as sole sovereign of the Roman world, extended his authority over the whole human race. Every apprehension of those evils under the pressure of which all had suffered was now removed; men whose heads had drooped in sorrow now regarded each other with smiling countenances, and looks expressive of their inward joy. With processions and hymns of praise they first of all, as they were told, ascribed the supreme sovereignty to God, as in truth the King of kings; and then with continued acclamations rendered honor to the victorious emperor, and the Cæsars, his most discreet and pious sons. The former afflictions were forgotten, and all past impieties forgiven; while with the enjoyment of present happiness was mingled the expectation of continued blessings in the future.

Chapter XX—*Constantine's Enactments in Favor of the Confessors.*

Moreover, the emperor's edicts, permeated with his humane spirit, were published among us also, as they had been among the inhabitants of

the other division of the empire; and his laws, which breathed a spirit of piety toward God, gave promise of manifold blessings, since they secured many advantages to his provincial subjects in every nation, and at the same time prescribed measures suited to the exigencies of the churches of God. For first of all they recalled those who, in consequence of their refusal to join in idol worship, had been driven to exile, or ejected from their homes by the governors of their respective provinces. In the next place, they relieved from their burdens those who for the same reason had been adjudged to serve in the civil courts, and ordained restitution to be made to any who had been deprived of property. They too, who in the time of trial had signalized themselves by fortitude of soul in the cause of God, and had therefore been condemned to the painful labor of the mines, or consigned to the solitude of islands, or compelled to toil in the public works, all received an immediate release from these burdens; while others, whose religious constancy had cost them the forfeiture of their military rank, were vindicated by the emperor's generosity from this dishonor; for he granted them the alternative either of resuming their rank, and enjoying their former privileges, or, in the event of their preferring a more settled life, of perpetual exemption from all service. Lastly, all who had been compelled by way of disgrace and insult to serve in the employments of women[28], he likewise freed with the rest.

Chapter XXI—*His Laws concerning Martyrs, and concerning Ecclesiastical Property.*

Such were the benefits secured by the emperor's written mandates to the persons of those who had thus suffered for the faith, and his laws made ample provision for their property also.

With regard to those holy martyrs of God who had laid down their lives in the confession of His name, he directed that their estates should be enjoyed by their nearest kindred; and, in default of any of these, that the right of inheritance should be vested in the churches. Farther, whatever property had been consigned to other parties from the treasury, whether in

[28] [In the gynæcia (γυναικεῖα), or places where women, and subsequently slaves of both sexes, were employed in spinning and weaving for the emperor. *Vide infra,* ch. 34—*Bag.*] See note on ch. 34.

the way of sale or gift, together with that retained in the treasury itself, the generous mandate of the emperor directed should be restored to the original owners. Such benefits did his bounty, thus widely diffused, confer on the Church of God.

Chapter XXII—*How he won the Favor of the People.*

But his munificence bestowed still further and more numerous favors on the heathen peoples and the other nations of his empire. So that the inhabitants of our [Eastern] regions, who had heard of the privileges experienced in the opposite portion of the empire, and had blessed the fortunate recipients of them, and longed for the enjoyment of a similar lot for themselves, now with one consent proclaimed their own happiness, when they saw themselves in possession of all these blessings; and confessed that the appearance of such a monarch to the human race was indeed a marvelous event, and such as the world's history had never yet recorded. Such were their sentiments.

Chapter XXIII—*That he declared God to be the Author of his Prosperity; and concerning his Rescripts.*

And now that, through the powerful aid of God his Saviour, all nations owned their subjection to the emperor's authority, he openly proclaimed to all the name of Him to whose bounty he owed all his blessings, and declared that He, and not himself, was the author of his past victories. This declaration, written both in the Latin and Greek languages, he caused to be transmitted through every province of the empire. Now the excellence of his style of expression may be known from a perusal of his letters themselves which were two in number; one addressed to the churches of God; the other to the heathen population in the several cities of the empire. The latter of these I think it well to insert here as connected with my present subject, in order on the one hand that a copy of this document may be recorded as matter of history, and thus preserved to posterity, and on the other that it may serve to confirm the truth of my present narrative. It is taken from an authentic copy of the imperial statute in my own possession and the signature in the emperor's own handwriting

attaches as it were the impress of truth to the statement I have made.

Chapter XXIV—*Law of Constantine respecting Piety towards God, and the Christian Religion.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to the inhabitants of the province of Palestine. "To all who entertain just and sound sentiments respecting the character of the Supreme Being, it has long been most clearly evident, and beyond the possibility of doubt, how vast a difference there has ever been between those who maintain a careful observance of the hallowed duties of the Christian religion, and those who treat this religion with hostility or contempt. But at this present time, we may see by still more manifest proofs, and still more decisive instances, both how unreasonable it were to question this truth, and how mighty is the power of the Supreme God; since it appears that they who faithfully observe His holy laws, and shrink from the transgression of His commandments, are rewarded with abundant blessings, and are endued with well-grounded hope as well as ample power for the accomplishment of their undertakings. On the other hand, they who have cherished impious sentiments have experienced results corresponding to their evil choice. For how is it to be expected that any blessing would be obtained by one who neither desired to acknowledge nor duly to worship that God who is the source of all blessing? Indeed, facts themselves are a confirmation of what I say.

Chapter XXV—*An Illustration from Ancient Times.*

"For certainly any one who will mentally retrace the course of events from the earliest period down to the present time, and will reflect on what has occurred in past ages, will find that all who have made justice and probity the basis of their conduct, have not only carried their undertakings to a successful issue, but have gathered, as it were, a store of sweet fruit as the produce of this pleasant root. Again, whoever observes the career of those who have been bold in the practice of oppression or injustice; who have either directed their senseless fury against God himself, or have conceived no kindly feelings towards their fellow-men, but have dared to

afflict them with exile, disgrace, confiscation, massacre, or other miseries of the like kind, and all this without any sense of compunction, or wish to direct thoughts to a better course, will find that such men have received a recompense proportioned to their crimes. And these are results which might naturally and reasonably be expected to ensue.

Chapter XXVI—*Of Persecuted and Persecutors.*

"For whoever have addressed themselves with integrity of purpose to any course of action, keeping the fear of God continually before their thoughts, and preserving an unwavering faith in him, without allowing present fears or dangers to outweigh their hope of future blessings—such persons, though for a season they may have experienced painful trials, have borne their afflictions lightly, being supported by the belief of greater rewards in store for them; and their character has acquired a brighter luster in proportion to the severity of their past sufferings. With regard, on the other hand, to those who have either dishonorably slighted the principles of justice, or refused to acknowledge the Supreme God themselves, and yet have dared to subject others who have faithfully maintained his worship to the most cruel insults and punishments; who have failed equally to recognize their own wretchedness in oppressing others on such grounds, and the happiness and blessing of those who preserved their devotion to God even in the midst of such sufferings; with regard, I say, to such men, many a time have their armies been slaughtered, many a time have they been put to flight; and their warlike preparations have ended in total ruin and defeat.

Chapter XXVII—*How the Persecution became the Occasion of Calamities to the Aggressors.*

"From the causes I have described, grievous wars arose, and destructive devastations. Hence followed a scarcity of the common necessaries of life, and a crowd of consequent miseries; hence, too, the authors of these impieties have either met a disastrous death of extreme suffering, or have dragged out an ignominious existence, and confessed it to be worse than death itself, thus receiving as it were a measure of punishment proportioned to the heinousness of their crimes. For each experienced a

degree of calamity according to the blind fury with which he had been led to combat, and as he thought, defeat the Divine will; so that they not only felt the pressure of the ills of this present life, but were tormented also by a most lively apprehension of punishment in the future world.

Chapter XXVIII—*That God chose Constantine to be the Minister of Blessing.*

"And now, with such a mass of impiety oppressing the human race, and the commonwealth in danger of being utterly destroyed, as if by the agency of some pestilential disease, and therefore needing powerful and effectual aid; what was the relief, and what the remedy which the Divinity devised for these evils? (And by Divinity is meant the one who is alone and truly God, the possessor of almighty and eternal power; and surely it cannot be deemed arrogance in one who has received benefits from God, to acknowledge them in the loftiest terms of praise.) I myself, then, was the instrument whose services He chose, and esteemed suited for the accomplishment of his will. Accordingly, beginning at the remote Britannic ocean, and the regions where, according to the law of nature, the sun sinks beneath the horizon, through the aid of divine power I banished and utterly removed every form of evil which prevailed, in the hope that the human race, enlightened through my instrumentality, might be recalled to a due observance of the holy laws of God, and at the same time our most blessed faith might prosper under the guidance of his almighty hand.

Chapter XXIX—*Constantine's Expressions of Piety towards God; and Praise of the Confessors.*

"I said, under the guidance of his hand; for I would desire never to be forgetful of the gratitude due to his grace. Believing, therefore, that this most excellent service had been confided to me as a special gift, I proceeded as far as the regions of the East, which, being under the pressure of severer calamities, seemed to demand still more effectual remedies at my hands. At the same time I am most certainly persuaded that I myself owe my life, my every breath, in short, my very inmost and secret thoughts, entirely to the

favor of the Supreme God. Now I am well aware that they who are sincere in the pursuit of the heavenly hope, and have fixed this hope in heaven itself as the peculiar and predominant principle of their lives, have no need to depend on human favor, but rather have enjoyed higher honors in proportion as they have separated themselves from the inferior and evil things of this earthly existence. Nevertheless I deem it incumbent on me to remove at once and most completely from all such persons the hard necessities laid upon them for a season, and the unjust inflictions under which they have suffered, though free from any guilt or just liability. For it would be strange indeed, that the fortitude and constancy of soul displayed by such men should be fully apparent during the reign of those whose first object it was to persecute them on account of their devotion to God, and yet that the glory of their character should not be more bright and blessed, under the administration of a prince who is His servant.

Chapter XXX—*A Law granting Release from Exile, from Service in the Courts, and from the Confiscation of Property.*

"Let all therefore who have exchanged their country for a foreign land, because they would not abandon that reverence and faith toward God to which they had devoted themselves with their whole hearts, and have in consequence at different times been subject to the cruel sentence of the courts; together with any who have been enrolled in the registers of the public courts though in time past exempt from such office; let these, I say, now render thanks to God the Liberator of all, in that they are restored to their hereditary property, and their wonted tranquility. Let those also who have been despoiled of their goods, and have hitherto passed a wretched existence, mourning under the loss of all that they possessed, once more be restored to their former homes, their families, and estates, and receive with joy the bountiful kindness of God.

Chapter XXXI—*Release likewise granted to Exiles in the Islands.*

"Furthermore, it is our command that all those who have been detained in the islands against their will should receive the benefit of this present provision; in order that they who till now have been surrounded by

rugged mountains and the encircling barrier of the ocean, being now set free from that gloomy and desolate solitude, may fulfill their fondest wish by revisiting their dearest friends. Those, too, who have prolonged a miserable life in the midst of abject and wretched squalor, welcoming their restoration as an unlooked-for gain, and discarding henceforth all anxious thoughts, may pass their lives with us in freedom from all fear. For that any one could live in a state of fear under our government, when we boast and believe ourselves to be the servants of God, would surely be a thing most extraordinary even to hear of, and quite incredible; and our mission is to rectify the errors of the others.

Chapter XXXII—*And to those ignominiously employed in the Mines and Public Works.*

"Again, with regard to those who have been condemned either to the grievous labor of the mines, or to service in the public works, let them enjoy the sweets of leisure in place of these long-continued toils, and henceforth lead a far easier life, and more accordant with the wishes of their hearts, exchanging the incessant hardships of their tasks for quiet relaxation. And if any have forfeited the common privilege of liberty, or have unhappily suffered dishonor, let them hasten back every one to the country of his nativity, and resume with becoming joy their former positions in society, from which they have been as it were separated by long residence abroad.

Chapter XXXIII—*Concerning those Confessors engaged in Military Service.*

"Once more, with respect to those who had previously been preferred to any military distinction, of which they were afterwards deprived, for the cruel and unjust reason that they chose rather to acknowledge their allegiance to God than to retain the rank they held; we leave them perfect liberty of choice, either to occupy their former stations, should they be content again to engage in military service, or after an honorable discharge, to live in undisturbed tranquility. For it is fair and consistent that men who have displayed such magnanimity and fortitude in meeting the perils to which they have been exposed, should be allowed the choice

either of enjoying peaceful leisure, or resuming their former rank.

Chapter XXXIV—*The Liberation of Free Persons condemned to labor in the Women's Apartments, or to Servitude.*

"Lastly, if any have wrongfully been deprived of the privileges of noble lineage, and subjected to a judicial sentence which has consigned them to the women's apartments and to the linen making, there to undergo a cruel and miserable labor, or reduced them to servitude for the benefit of the public treasury, without any exemption on the ground of superior birth; let such persons, resuming the honors they had previously enjoyed, and their proper dignities, henceforward exult in the blessings of liberty, and lead a glad life. Let the free man, too, by some injustice and inhumanity, or even madness, made a slave, who has felt the sudden transition from liberty to bondage, and ofttimes bewailed his unwonted labors, return to his family once more a free man in virtue of this our ordinance, and seek those employments which befit a state of freedom; and let him dismiss from his remembrance those services which he found so oppressive, and which so ill became his condition.

Chapter XXXV—*Of the Inheritance of the Property of Martyrs and Confessors, also of those who had suffered Banishment or Confiscation of Property.*

"Nor must we omit to notice those estates of which individuals have been deprived on various pretenses. For if any of those who have engaged with dauntless and resolute determination in the noble and divine conflict of martyrdom have also been stripped of their fortunes; or if the same has been the lot of the confessors, who have won for themselves the hope of eternal treasures; or if the loss of property has befallen those who were driven from their native land because they would not yield to the persecutors, and betray their faith; lastly, if any who have escaped the sentence of death have yet been despoiled of their worldly goods; we ordain that the inheritances of all such persons be transferred to their nearest kindred. And whereas the laws expressly assign this right to those most nearly related, it will be easy to ascertain to whom these inheritances

severally belong. And it is evidently reasonable that the succession in these cases should belong to those who would have stood in the place of nearest affinity, had the deceased experienced a natural death.

Chapter XXXVI—*The Church is declared Heir of those who leave no Kindred; and the Free Gifts of such Persons Confirmed.*

"But should there be no surviving relation to succeed in due course to the property of those above-mentioned, I mean the martyrs, or confessors, or those who for some such cause have been banished from their native land; in such cases we ordain that the church locally nearest in each instance shall succeed to the inheritance. And surely it will be no wrong to the departed that that church should be their heir, for whose sake they have endured every extremity of suffering. We think it necessary to add this also, that in case any of the above-mentioned persons have donated any part of their property in the way of free gift, possession of such property shall be assured, as is reasonable, to those who have thus received it.

Chapter XXXVII—*Lands, Gardens, or Houses, but not Actual Produce from them, are to be given back.*

"And that there may be no obscurity in this our ordinance, but every one may readily apprehend its requirements, let all men hereby know that if they are now maintaining themselves in possession of a piece of land, or a house, or garden, or anything else which had appertained to the before-mentioned persons, it will be good and advantageous for them to acknowledge the fact, and make restitution with the least possible delay. On the other hand, although it should appear that some individuals have reaped abundant profits from this unjust possession, we do not consider that justice demands the restitution of such profits. They must, however, declare explicitly what amount of benefit they have thus derived, and from what sources, and entreat our pardon for this offense; in order that their past covetousness may in some measure be atoned for, and that the Supreme God may accept this compensation as a token of contrition, and be pleased graciously to pardon the sin.

Chapter XXXVIII—*In what Manner Requests should be made for these.*

"But it is possible that those who have become masters of such property (if it be right or possible to allow them such a title) will assure us by way of apology for their conduct, that it was not in their power to abstain from this appropriation at a time when a spectacle of misery in all its forms everywhere met the view; when men were cruelly driven from their homes, slaughtered without mercy, thrust forth without remorse; when the confiscation of the property of innocent persons was a common thing, and when persecutions and property seizures were unceasing. If any defend their conduct by such reasons as these, and still persist in their avaricious temper, they shall be made sensible that such a course will bring punishment on themselves, and all the more because this correction of evil is the very characteristic of our service to the Supreme God. So that it will henceforth be dangerous to retain what dire necessity may in time past have compelled men to take; especially because it is in any case incumbent on us to discourage covetous desires, both by persuasion, and by warning examples.

Chapter XXXIX—*The Treasury must restore Lands, Gardens, and Houses to the Churches.*

"Nor shall the treasury itself, should it have any of the things we have spoken of, be permitted to keep them; but, without venturing as it were to raise its voice against the holy churches, it shall justly relinquish in their favor what it has for a time unjustly retained. We ordain, therefore, that all things whatsoever which shall appear righteously to belong to the churches, whether the property consist of houses or fields and gardens, or whatever the nature of it may be, shall be restored in their full value and integrity, and with undiminished right of possession.

Chapter XL—*The Tombs of Martyrs and the Cemeteries to be transferred to the Possession of the Churches.*

"Again, with respect to those places which are honored in being the depositories of the remains of martyrs, and continue to be memorials of their glorious departure; how can we doubt that they rightly belong to the churches, or refrain from issuing our injunction to that effect? For surely

there can be no better liberality, no labor more pleasing or profitable, than to be thus employed under the guidance of the Divine Spirit, in order that those things which have been appropriated on false pretenses by unjust and wicked men, may be restored, as justice demands, and once more secured to the holy churches.

Chapter XLI—*Those who have purchased Property belonging to the Church, or received it as a Gift, are to restore it.*

"And since it would be wrong in a provision intended to include all cases, to pass over those who have either procured any such property by right of purchase from the treasury, or have retained it when conveyed to them in the form of a gift; let all who have thus rashly indulged their insatiable thirst of gain be assured that, although by daring to make such purchases they have done all in their power to alienate our clemency from themselves, they shall nevertheless not fail of obtaining it, so far as is possible and consistent with propriety in each case. So much then is determined.

Chapter XLII—*An Earnest Exhortation to worship God.*

"And now, since it appears by the clearest and most convincing evidence, that the miseries which erewhile oppressed the entire human race are now banished from every part of the world, through the power of Almighty God, and at the same time the counsel and aid which he is pleased on many occasions to administer through our agency; it remains for all, both individually and unitedly, to observe and seriously consider how great this power and how efficacious this grace are, which have annihilated and utterly destroyed this generation, as I may call them, of most wicked and evil men; have restored joy to the good, and diffused it over all countries; and now guarantee the fullest authority both to honor the Divine law as it should be honored, with all reverence, and pay due observance to those who have dedicated themselves to the service of that law. These rising as from some dark abyss and, with an enlightened knowledge of the present course of events, will henceforward render to its precepts that becoming reverence and honor which are consistent with their pious character.

Let this ordinance be published in our Eastern provinces."

Chapter XLIII—*How the Enactments of Constantine were carried into Effect.*

Such were the injunctions contained in the first letter which the emperor addressed to us. And the provisions of this enactment were speedily carried into effect, everything being conducted in a manner quite different from the atrocities which had but lately been daringly perpetrated during the cruel ascendancy of the tyrants. Those persons also who were legally entitled to it, received the benefit of the emperor's liberality.

Chapter XLIV—*That he promoted Christians to Offices of Government, and forbade Gentiles in Such Stations to offer Sacrifice.*

After this the emperor continued to address himself to matters of high importance, and first he sent governors to the several provinces, mostly such as were devoted to the saving faith; and if any appeared inclined to adhere to Gentile worship, he forbade them to offer sacrifice. This law applied also to those who surpassed the provincial governors in rank and dignity, and even to those who occupied the highest station, and held the authority of the Prætorian Præfecture[29]. If they were Christians, they were free to act consistently with their profession; if otherwise, the law required them to abstain from idolatrous sacrifices.

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[29] [The power of the four Prætorian Præfects in the time of Constantine is thus described by Gibbon: "1. The Præfect of the East stretched his ample jurisdiction into the three parts of the globe which were subject to the Romans, from the cataracts of the Nile to the banks of the Phasis, and from the mountains of Thrace to the frontiers of Persia. 2. The important provinces of Pannonia, Dacia, Macedonia, and Greece once acknowledged the authority of the Præfect of Illyricum. 3. The power of the Præfect of Italy was not confined to the country from whence he derived his title; it extended over the additional territory of Rhætia as far as the banks of the Danube, over the dependent islands of the Mediterranean, and over that part of the continent of Africa which lies between the confines of Cyrene and those of Tingitania. 4. The Præfect of the Gauls comprehended under that plural denomination the kindred provinces of Britain and Spain, and his authority was obeyed from the wall of Antoninus to the fort of Mount Atlas."—*Decline and Fall,* chap. 17— *Bag.*]

Chapter XLV—*Statutes which forbade Sacrifice, and enjoined the Building of Churches.*

Soon after this, two laws were promulgated about the same time; one of which was intended to restrain the idolatrous abominations which in time past had been practiced in every city and country; and it provided that no one should erect images, or practice divination and other false and foolish arts, or offer sacrifice in any way. The other statute commanded the heightening of the oratories, and the enlargement in length and breadth of the churches of God; as though it were expected that, now the madness of polytheism was wholly removed, pretty nearly all mankind would henceforth attach themselves to the service of God. His own personal piety induced the emperor to devise and write these instructions to the governors of the several provinces; and the law farther admonished them not to spare the expenditure of money, but to draw supplies from the imperial treasury itself. Similar instructions were written also to the bishops of the several churches; and the emperor was pleased to transmit the same to myself, being the first letter which he personally addressed to me.

Chapter XLVI—*Constantine's Letter to Eusebius and Other Bishops, respecting the Building of Churches, with Instructions to repair the Old, and erect New Ones on a Larger Scale, with the Aid of the Provincial Governors.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to Eusebius.

"Forasmuch as the unholy and willful rule of tyranny has persecuted the servants of our Saviour until this present time, I believe and have fully satisfied myself, best beloved brother, that the buildings belonging to all the churches have either become ruinous through actual neglect, or have received inadequate attention from the dread of the violent spirit of the times.

"But now, that liberty is restored, and that serpent driven from the administration of public affairs by the providence of the Supreme God, and our instrumentality, we trust that all can see the efficacy of the Divine power, and that they who through fear of persecution or through unbelief

have fallen into any errors, will now acknowledge the true God, and adopt in future that course of life which is according to truth and rectitude. With respect, therefore, to the churches over which you yourself preside, as well as the bishops, presbyters, and deacons of other churches with whom you are acquainted, do you admonish all to be zealous in their attention to the buildings of the churches, and either to repair or enlarge those which at present exist, or, in cases of necessity, to erect new ones.

"We also empower you, and the others through you, to demand what is needful for the work, both from the provincial governors and from the Prætorian Præfect. For they have received instructions to be most diligent in obedience to your Holiness's orders. God preserve you, beloved brother." A copy of this charge was transmitted throughout all the provinces to the bishops of the several churches; the provincial governors received directions accordingly, and the imperial statute was speedily carried into effect.

Chapter XLVII—*That he wrote a Letter in Condemnation of Idolatry.*

Moreover, the emperor, who continually made progress in piety towards God, dispatched an admonitory letter to the inhabitants of every province, respecting the error of idolatry into which his predecessors in power had fallen, in which he eloquently exhorts his subjects to acknowledge the Supreme God, and openly to profess their allegiance to his Christ as their Saviour. This letter also, which is in his own handwriting, I have judged it necessary to translate from the Latin for the present work, in order that we may hear, as it were, the voice the emperor himself uttering these sentiments in the audience of all mankind.

Chapter XLVIII—*Constantine's Edict to the People of the Provinces concerning the Error of Polytheism, commencing with Some General Remarks on Virtue and Vice.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to the people of the Eastern provinces. "Whatever is comprehended under the sovereign laws of nature, seems to convey to all men an adequate idea of the forethought and intelligence of the divine order. Nor can any, whose minds are directed in the true path of knowledge to the attainment of that end, entertain a

doubt that the just perceptions of sound reason, as well as those of the natural vision itself, through the sole influence of genuine virtue, lead to the knowledge of God. Accordingly no wise man will ever be surprised when he sees the mass of mankind influenced by opposite sentiments. For the beauty of virtue would be useless and unperceived, did not vice display in contrast with it the course of perversity and folly. Hence it is that the one is crowned with reward, while the most high God is himself the administrator of judgment to the other.

"And now I will endeavor to lay before you all as explicitly as possible, the nature of my own hopes of future happiness.

Chapter XLIX—*Concerning Constantine's Pious Father, and the Persecutors Diocletian and Maximian.*

"The former emperors I have been accustomed to regard as those with whom I could have no sympathy, on account of the savage cruelty of their character. Indeed, my father was the only one who uniformly practiced the duties of humanity, and with admirable piety called for the blessing of God the Father on all his actions, but the rest, unsound in mind, were more zealous of cruel than gentle measures; and this disposition they indulged without restraint, and thus persecuted the true doctrine during the whole period of their reign. Nay, so violent did their malicious fury become, that in the midst of a profound peace, as regards both the religious and ordinary interests of men, they kindled, as it were, the flames of a civil war.

Chapter L—*That the Persecution originated on Account of the Oracle of Apollo, who, it was said, could not give Oracles because of "the Righteous Men."*

"About that time it is said that Apollo spoke from a deep and gloomy cavern, and through the medium of no human voice, and declared that *the righteous men* on earth were a bar to his speaking the truth, and accordingly that the oracles from the tripod were fallacious. Hence it was that he suffered his tresses to droop in token of grief, and mourned the evils which the loss of the oracular spirit would entail on mankind. But let us mark the consequences of this.

Chapter LI.—*That Constantine, when a Youth, heard from him who wrote the Persecution Edict that "the Righteous Men" were the Christians.*

"I call now on thee, most high God, to witness that, when young, I heard him who at that time was chief among the Roman emperors, unhappy, truly unhappy as he was, and laboring under mental delusion, make earnest enquiry of his attendants as to who these righteous ones on earth were, and that one of the Pagan priests then present replied that they were doubtless the Christians. This answer he eagerly received, like some honeyed draught, and unsheathed the sword which was ordained for the punishment of crime, against those whose holiness was beyond reproach. Immediately, therefore, he issued those sanguinary edicts, traced, if I may so express myself, with a sword's point dipped in blood; at the same time commanding his judges to tax their ingenuity for the invention of new and more terrible punishments.

Chapter LII—*The Manifold Forms of Torture and Punishment practiced against the Christians.*

"Then, indeed, one might see with what arrogance those venerable worshipers of God were daily exposed, with continued and relentless cruelty, to outrages of the most grievous kind, and how that modesty of character which no enemy had ever treated with disrespect, became the mere sport of their infuriated fellow-citizens. Is there any punishment by fire, are there any tortures or forms of torment, which were not applied to all, without distinction of age or sex? Then, it may be truly said, the earth shed tears, the all-encircling compass of heaven mourned because of the pollution of blood; and the very light of day itself was darkened in grief at the spectacle.

Chapter LIII—*That the Barbarians kindly received the Christians.*

"But what is the consequence of this? Why, the barbarians themselves may boast now of the contrast their conduct presents to these creel deeds; for they received and kept in gentlest captivity those who then fled from

amongst us, and secured to them not merely safety from danger, but also the free exercise of their holy religion. And now the Roman people bear that lasting stain which the Christians, at that time driven from the Roman world, and taking refuge with the barbarians, have branded on them.

Chapter LIV—*What Vengeance overtook those who on Account of the Oracle raised the Persecution.*

"But why need I longer dwell on these lamentable events, and the general sorrow which in consequence pervaded the world? The perpetrators of this dreadful guilt are now no more; they have experienced a miserable end, and are consigned to unceasing punishment in the depths of the lower world. They encountered each other in civil strife, and have left neither name nor race behind. And surely this calamity would never have befallen them, had not that impious deliverance of the Pythian oracle exercised a delusive power over them.

Chapter LV—*Constantine gives Glory to God, makes Grateful Acknowledgment of the Sign of the Cross, and prays for the Churches and People.*

And now I beseech thee, most mighty God, to be merciful and gracious to thine Eastern nations, to thy people in these provinces, worn as they are by protracted miseries; and grant them healing through thy servant. Not without cause, O holy God, do I prefer this prayer to thee, the Lord of all. Under thy guidance have I devised and accomplished measures fraught with blessings; preceded by thy sacred sign I have led thy armies to victory; and still, on each occasion of public danger, I follow the same symbol of thy perfections while advancing to meet the foe. Therefore have I dedicated to thy service a soul duly attempered by love and fear. For thy name I truly love, while I regard with reverence that power of which thou hast given abundant proofs, to the confirmation and increase of my faith. I hasten, then, to devote all my powers to the restoration of thy most holy dwelling-place, which those profane and impious men have defiled by the contamination of violence.

Chapter LVI—*He prays that All may be Christians, but compels None.*

"My own desire is, for the common good of the world and the advantage of all mankind, that thy people should enjoy a life of peace and undisturbed concord. Let those, therefore, who still delight in error, be made welcome to the same degree of peace and tranquility which they have who believe. For it may be that this restoration of equal privileges to all will prevail to lead them into the straight path. Let no one molest another, but let every one do as his soul desires. Only let men of sound judgment be assured of this, that those only can live a life of holiness and purity, whom thou callest to a reliance on thy holy laws. With regard to those who will hold themselves aloof from us, let them have, if they please, their temples of lies; *we* have the glorious edifice of thy truth, which thou hast given us as our native home. We pray, however, that they too may receive the same blessing, and thus experience that heartfelt joy which unity of sentiment inspires.

Chapter LVII—*He gives Glory to God, who has given Light by his Son to those who were in Error.*

"And truly our worship is no new or recent thing, but one which thou hast ordained for thine own due honor, from the time when, as we believe, this system of the universe was first established. And, although mankind have deeply fallen, and have been seduced by manifold errors, yet hast thou revealed a pure light in the person of thy Son, that the power of evil should not utterly prevail, and hast thus given testimony to all men concerning thyself.

Chapter LVIII—*He glorifies him again for his Government of the Universe.*

"The truth of this is assured to us by thy works. It is thy power which removes our guilt, and makes us faithful. The sun and the moon have their settled course. The stars move in no uncertain orbits round this terrestrial globe. The revolution of the seasons recurs according to unerring laws. The solid fabric of the earth was established by thy word; the winds receive their

impulse at appointed times; and the course of the waters continues with ceaseless flow, the ocean is circumscribed by an immovable barrier, and whatever is comprehended within the compass of earth and sea, is all contrived for wondrous and important ends. Were it not so, were not all regulated by the determination of thy will, so great a diversity, so manifold a division of power, would unquestionably have brought ruin on the whole race and its affairs. For those agencies which have maintained a mutual strife would thus have carried to a more deadly length that hostility against the human race which they even now exercise, though unseen by mortal eyes.

Chapter LIX—*He gives Glory to God, as the Constant Teacher of Good.*

"Abundant thanks, most mighty God, and Lord of all, be rendered to thee, that, by so much as our nature becomes known from the diversified pursuits of man, by so much the more are the precepts of thy divine doctrine confirmed to those whose thoughts are directed aright, and who are sincerely devoted to true virtue. As for those who will not allow themselves to be cured of their error, let them not attribute this to any but themselves. For that remedy which is of sovereign and healing virtue is openly placed within the reach of all. Only let not any one inflict an injury on that religion which experience itself testifies to be pure and undefiled. Henceforward, therefore, let us all enjoy in common the privilege placed within our reach, I mean the blessing of peace, endeavoring to keep our conscience pure from all that is contrary.

Chapter LX—*An Admonition at the Close of the Edict, that No One should trouble his Neighbor.*

"Once more, let none use that to the detriment of another which he may himself have received on conviction of its truth; but let every one, if it be possible, apply what he has understood and known to the benefit of his neighbor; if otherwise, let him relinquish the attempt. For it is one thing voluntarily to undertake the conflict for immortality, another to compel others to do so from the fear of punishment.

"These are our words; and we have enlarged on these topics more than

our ordinary clemency would have dictated, because we were unwilling to dissemble or be false to the true faith; and the more so, since we understand there are some who say that the rites of the heathen temples, and the power of darkness, have been entirely removed. We should indeed have earnestly recommended such removal to all men, were it not that the rebellious spirit of those wicked errors still continues obstinately fixed in the minds of some, so as to discourage the hope of any general restoration of mankind to the ways of truth."

Chapter LXI—*How Controversies originated at Alexandria through Matters relating to Arius.*

In this manner the emperor, like a powerful herald of God, addressed himself by his own letter to all the provinces, at the same time warning his subjects against superstitious error, and encouraging them in the pursuit of true godliness. But in the midst of his joyful anticipations of the success of this measure, he received tidings of a most serious disturbance which had invaded the peace of the Church. This intelligence he heard with deep concern, and at once endeavored to devise a remedy for the evil. The origin of this disturbance may be thus described. The people of God were in a truly flourishing state, and abounding in the practice of good works. No terror from without assailed them, but a bright and most profound peace, through the favor of God, encompassed his Church on every side. Meantime, however, the spirit of envy was watching to destroy our blessings, which at first crept in unperceived, but soon revelled in the midst of the assemblies of the saints. At length it reached the bishops themselves, and arrayed them in angry hostility against each other, on pretense of a jealous regard for the doctrines of Divine truth. Hence it was that a mighty fire was kindled as it were from a little spark, and which, originating in the first instance in the Alexandrian church[30], overspread the whole of Egypt and Libya, and the further Thebaid. Eventually it extended its ravages to the other provinces and cities of the empire; so that not only the prelates of the churches might be seen encountering each other in the strife of words, but the people

[30] It was at Alexandria that the controversy with Arius arose. He was called to account by Alexander of Alexandria who summoned one council and then another, at which Arius and his followers were excommunicated.

themselves were completely divided, some adhering to one faction and others to another. Nay, so notorious did the scandal of these proceedings become, that the sacred matters of inspired teaching were exposed to the most shameful ridicule in the very theaters of the unbelievers.

Chapter LXII—*Concerning the Same Arius, and the Melitians*[31].

Some thus at Alexandria maintained an obstinate conflict on the highest questions. Others throughout Egypt and the Upper Thebaid, were at variance on account of an earlier controversy; so that the churches were everywhere distracted by divisions. The body therefore being thus diseased, the whole of Libya caught the contagion; and the rest of the remoter provinces became affected with the same disorder. For the disputants at Alexandria sent emissaries to the bishops of the several provinces, who accordingly ranged themselves as partisans on either side, and shared in the same spirit of discord.

Chapter LXIII—*How Constantine sent a Messenger and a Letter concerning Peace.*

As soon as the emperor was informed of these facts, which he heard with much sorrow of heart, considering them in the light of a calamity personally affecting himself, he forthwith selected from the Christians in his train one whom he well knew to be approved for the sobriety and genuineness of his faith[32], and who had before this time distinguished himself by the boldness of his religious profession, and sent him to negotiate peace between the dissentient parties at Alexandria. He also made him the bearer of a most needful and appropriate letter to the original movers of the strife; and this letter, as exhibiting a specimen of his watchful care over God's people, it may be well to introduce into this our narrative of his life. Its purport was as follows.

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[31] [The Melitians, or Meletians, an obscure Egyptian sect, of whom little satisfactory is recorded—*Bag.*]

[32] [Hosius, bishop of Cordova—*Bag.*] Hosius had already been for some time a trusted adviser, having acted for Constantine also in the Donatist matters.

Chapter LXIV—*Constantine's Letter to Alexander the Bishop, and Arius the Presbyter.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to Alexander and Arius.

"I call that God to witness, as well I may, who is the helper of my endeavors, and the Preserver of all men, that I had a twofold reason for undertaking that duty which I have now performed.

Chapter LXV—*His Continual Anxiety for Peace.*

"My design then was, first, to bring the diverse judgments formed by all nations respecting the Deity to a condition, as it were, of settled uniformity; and, secondly, to restore to health the system of the world, then suffering under the malignant power of a grievous distemper. Keeping these objects in view, I sought to accomplish the one by the secret eye of thought, while the other I tried to rectify by the power of military authority. For I was aware that, if I should succeed in establishing, according to my hopes, a common harmony of sentiment among all the servants of God, the general course of affairs would also experience a change correspondent to the pious desires of them all.

Chapter LXVI—*That he also adjusted the Controversies which had arisen in Africa.*

"Finding, then, that the whole of Africa was pervaded by an intolerable spirit of mad folly, through the influence of those who with heedless frivolity had presumed to rend the religion of the people into diverse sects; I was anxious to check this disorder, and could discover no other remedy equal to the occasion, except in sending some of yourselves to aid in restoring mutual harmony among the disputants, after I had removed that common enemy[33] of mankind who had interposed his lawless

[33] [Licinius, whose prohibition of synods is referred to in Bk. 1, ch. 51. The disputes here mentioned are those between the Catholic Christians and the Donatists, a very violent sect which sprung up in Africa after the persecution by Diocletian—*Bag.*]

sentence for the prohibition of your holy synods.

Chapter LXVII—*That Religion began in the East.*

"For since the power of Divine light, and the law of sacred worship, which, proceeding in the first instance, through the favor of God, from the bosom, as it were, of the East, have illumined the world, by their sacred radiance, I naturally believed that you would be the first to promote the salvation of other nations, and resolved with all energy of thought and diligence of enquiry to seek your aid. As soon, therefore, as I had secured my decisive victory and unquestionable triumph over my enemies, my first enquiry was concerning that object which I felt to be of paramount interest and importance.

Chapter LXVIII—*Being grieved by the Dissension, he counsels Peace.*

"But, O glorious Providence of God! how deep a wound did not my ears only, but my very heart receive in the report that divisions existed among yourselves more grievous still than those which continued in that country! so that you, through whose aid I had hoped to procure a remedy for the errors of others, are in a state which needs healing even more than theirs. And yet, having made a careful enquiry into the origin and foundation of these differences, I find the cause to be of a truly insignificant character, and quite unworthy of such fierce contention. Feeling myself, therefore, compelled to address you in this letter, and to appeal at the same time to your unanimity and sagacity, I call on Divine Providence to assist me in the task, while I interrupt your dissension in the character of a minister of peace. And with reason: for if I might expect, with the help of a higher Power, to be able without difficulty, by a judicious appeal to the pious feelings of those who heard me, to recall them to a better spirit, even though the occasion of the disagreement were a greater one, how can I refrain from promising myself a far easier and more speedy adjustment of this difference, when the cause which hinders general harmony of sentiment is intrinsically trifling and of little moment?

Chapter LXIX—*Origin of the Controversy between Alexander and Arius, and that these Questions ought not to have been discussed.*

I understand, then, that the origin of the present controversy is this. When you, Alexander, demanded of the presbyters what opinion they severally maintained respecting a certain passage in the Divine law, or rather, I should say, that you asked them something connected with an unprofitable question, then you, Arius, inconsiderately insisted on what ought never to have been conceived at all, or if conceived, should have been buried in profound silence. Hence it was that a dissension arose between you, fellowship was withdrawn, and the holy people, rent into diverse parties, no longer preserved the unity of the one body. Now, therefore, do ye both exhibit an equal degree of forbearance, and receive the advice which your fellow-servant righteously gives. What then is this advice? It was wrong in the first instance to propose such questions as these, or to reply to them when propounded. For those points of discussion which are enjoined by the authority of no law, but rather suggested by the contentious spirit which is fostered by misused leisure, even though they may be intended merely as an intellectual exercise, ought certainly to be confined to the region of our own thoughts, and not hastily produced in the popular assemblies, nor unadvisedly intrusted to the general ear. For how very few are there able either accurately to comprehend, or adequately to explain subjects so sublime and abstruse in their nature? Or, granting that one were fully competent for this, how many people will he convince? Or, who, again, in dealing with questions of such subtle nicety as these, can secure himself against a dangerous declension from the truth? It is incumbent therefore on us in these cases to be sparing of our words, lest, in case we ourselves are unable, through the feebleness of our natural faculties, to give a clear explanation of the subject before us, or, on the other hand, in case the slowness of our hearers' understandings disables them from arriving at an accurate apprehension of what we say, from one or other of these causes the people be reduced to the alternative either of blasphemy or schism.

Chapter LXX—*An Exhortation to Unanimity.*

"Let therefore both the unguarded question and the inconsiderate answer receive your mutual forgiveness. For the cause of your difference

has not been any of the leading doctrines or precepts of the Divine law, nor has any new heresy respecting the worship of God arisen among you. You are in truth of one and the same judgment[34]; you may therefore well join in communion and fellowship.

Chapter LXXI—*There should be no Contention in Matters which are in themselves of Little Moment.*

"For as long as you continue to contend about these small and very insignificant questions, it is not fitting that so large a portion of God's people should be under the direction of your judgment, since you are thus divided between yourselves. I believe it indeed to be not merely unbecoming, but positively evil, that such should be the case. But I will refresh your minds by a little illustration, as follows. You know that philosophers, though they all adhere to one system, are yet frequently at issue on certain points, and differ, perhaps, in their degree of knowledge; yet they are recalled to harmony of sentiment by the uniting power of their common doctrines. If this be true, is it not far more reasonable that you, who are the ministers of the Supreme God, should be of one mind respecting the profession of the same religion? But let us still more thoughtfully and with closer attention examine what I have said, and see whether it be right that, on the ground of some trifling and foolish verbal difference between ourselves, brethren should assume towards each other the attitude of enemies, and the august meeting of the Synod be rent by profane disunion, because of you who wrangle together on points so trivial and altogether unessential? This is vulgar, and rather characteristic of childish ignorance, than consistent with the wisdom of priests and men of sense. Let us withdraw ourselves with a good will from these temptations of the devil. Our great God and common Saviour of all has granted the

[34] [The emperor seems at this time to have had a very imperfect knowledge of the errors of the Arian heresy. After the Council of Nice, at which he heard them fully explained, he wrote of them in terms of decisive condemnation in his letter to the Alexandrian church. Vide Socrates' *Eccles. Hist.,* Bk. 1, ch. 9—*Bag.*] Neither at this time nor at any time does Constantine seem to have entered very fully into an appreciation of doctrinal niceties. Later he was more than tolerant of semi-Arianism. He seems to have depended a good deal on the "explanations" of others, and to have been led in a somewhat devious path in trying to follow all.

same light to us all. Permit me, who am his servant, to bring my task to a successful issue, under the direction of his Providence, that I may be enabled, through my exhortations, and diligence, and earnest admonition, to recall his people to communion and fellowship. For since you have, as I said, but one faith, and one sentiment respecting our religion, and since the Divine commandment in all its parts enjoins on us all the duty of maintaining a spirit of concord, let not the circumstance which has led to a slight difference between you, since it does not affect the validity of the whole, cause any division or schism among you. And this I say without in any way desiring to force you to entire unity of judgment in regard to this truly idle question, whatever its real nature may be. For the dignity of your synod may be preserved, and the communion of your whole body maintained unbroken, however wide a difference may exist among you as to unimportant matters. For we are not all of us like-minded on every subject, nor is there such a thing as one disposition and judgment common to all alike. As far, then, as regards the Divine Providence, let there be one faith, and one understanding among you, one united judgment in reference to God. But as to your subtle disputations on questions of little or no significance, though you may be unable to harmonize in sentiment, such differences should be consigned to the secret custody of your own minds and thoughts. And now, let the preciousness of common affection, let faith in the truth, let the honor due to God and to the observance of his law continue immovably among you. Resume, then, your mutual feelings of friendship, love, and regard; restore to the people their wonted embracings; and do ye yourselves, having purified your souls, as it were, once more acknowledge one another. For it often happens that when a reconciliation is effected by the removal of the causes of enmity, friendship becomes even sweeter than it was before.

Chapter LXXII—*The Excess of his Pious Concern caused him to shed Tears; and his Intended Journey to the East was postponed because of These Things.*

"Restore me then my quiet days, and untroubled nights, that the joy of undimmed light, the delight of a tranquil life, may henceforth be my portion. Else must I needs mourn, with constant tears, nor shall I be able to pass the residue of my days in peace. For while the people of God,

whose fellow-servant I am, are thus divided amongst themselves by an unreasonable and pernicious spirit of contention, how is it possible that I shall be able to maintain tranquility of mind? And I will give you a proof how great my sorrow has been on this behalf. Not long since I had visited Nicomedia, and intended forthwith to proceed from that city to the East. It was while I was hastening towards you, and had already accomplished the greater part of the distance, that the news of this matter reversed my plan, that I might not be compelled to see with my own eyes that which I felt myself scarcely able even to hear. Open then for me henceforward by your unity of judgment that road to the regions of the East which your dissensions have closed against me, and permit me speedily to see yourselves and all other peoples rejoicing together, and render due acknowledgment to God in the language of praise and thanksgiving for the restoration of general concord and liberty to all."

Chapter LXXIII—*The Controversy continues without Abatement, even after the Receipt of This Letter.*

In this manner the pious emperor endeavored by means of the foregoing letter to promote the peace of the Church of God. And the excellent man[35] to whom it was intrusted performed his part not merely by communicating the letter itself, but also by seconding the views of him who sent it; for he was, as I have said, in all respects a person of pious character. The evil, however, was greater than could be remedied by a single letter, insomuch that the acrimony of the contending parties continually increased, and the effects of the mischief extended to all the Eastern provinces. These things jealousy and some evil spirit who looked with an envious eye on the prosperity of the Church, wrought.

[35] [Hosius of Cordova, mentioned above, ch. 63—*Bag.*]

Book III.

Chapter I—*A Comparison of Constantine's Piety with the Wickedness of the Persecutors.*

In this manner that spirit who is the hater of good, actuated by envy at the blessing enjoyed by the Church, continued to raise against her the stormy troubles of intestine discord, in the midst of a period of peace and joy. Meanwhile, however, the divinely-favored emperor did not slight the duties befitting him, but exhibited in his whole conduct a direct contrast to those atrocities of which the cruel tyrants had been lately guilty, and thus triumphed over every enemy that opposed him. For in the first place, the tyrants, being themselves alienated from the true God, had enforced by every compulsion the worship of false deities; Constantine convinced mankind by actions as well as words, that these had but an imaginary existence, and exhorted them to acknowledge the only true God. They had derided his Christ with words of blasphemy; he assumed that as his safeguard against which they directed their blasphemies, and gloried in the symbol of the Saviour's passion. They had persecuted and driven from house and home the servants of Christ; he recalled them every one, and restored them to their native homes. They had covered them with dishonor; he made their condition honorable and enviable in the eyes of all. They had shamefully plundered and sold the goods of godly men; Constantine not only replaced this loss, but still further enriched them with abundant presents. They had circulated injurious calumnies, through their written ordinances, against the prelates of the Church; he on the contrary, conferred dignity on these individuals by personal marks of honor, and by his edicts and statutes raised them to higher distinction than before. They had utterly demolished and razed to the ground the houses of prayer; he commanded that those which still existed should be enlarged, and that new ones should be raised on a magnificent scale at the expense of the imperial treasury. They had ordered the inspired records to be burnt and utterly destroyed; he decreed that copies of them should be multiplied, and magnificently adorned at the charge of the imperial treasury. They had

strictly forbidden the prelates, anywhere or on any occasion, to convene synods; whereas he gathered them to his court from every province, received them into his palace, and even to his own private apartments and thought them worthy to share his home and table. They had honored the demons with offerings; Constantine exposed their error, and continually distributed the now useless materials for sacrifice, to those who would apply them to a better use. They had ordered the pagan temples to be sumptuously adorned; he razed to their foundations those of them which had been the chief objects of superstitious reverence. They had subjected God's servants to the most ignominious punishments; he took vengeance on the persecutors, and inflicted on them just chastisement in the name of God, while he held the memory of his holy martyrs in constant veneration. They had driven God's worshipers from the imperial palaces; he placed full confidence in them at all times, and knowing them to be the better disposed and more faithful than any beside. They, the victims of avarice, voluntarily subjected themselves as it were to the pangs of Tantalus; he with royal magnificence unlocked all his treasures, and distributed his gifts with rich and high-souled liberality. They committed countless murders, that they might plunder or confiscate the wealth of their victims; while throughout the reign of Constantine the sword of justice hung idle everywhere, and both people and municipal magistrates in every province were governed rather by paternal authority than by any constraining. Surely it must seem to all who duly regard these facts, that a new and fresh era of existence had begun to appear, and a light heretofore unknown suddenly to dawn from the midst of darkness on the human race; and all must confess that these things were entirely the work of God, who raised up this pious emperor to withstand the multitude of the ungodly.

Chapter II—*Farther Remarks on Constantine's Piety, and his Open Testimony to the Sign of the Cross.*

And when we consider that their iniquities were without example, and the atrocities which they dared to perpetrate against the Church such as had never been heard of in any age of the world, well might God himself bring before us something entirely new, and work thereby effects such as had hitherto been never either recorded or observed. And what miracle

was ever more marvelous than the virtues of this our emperor, whom the wisdom of God has vouchsafed as a gift to the human race? For truly he maintained a continual testimony to the Christ of God with all boldness, and before all men; and so far was he from shrinking from an open profession of the Christian name, that he rather desired to make it manifest to all that he regarded this as his highest honor, now impressing on his face the salutary sign, and now glorying in it as the trophy which led him on to victory.

Chapter III—*Of his Picture surmounted by a Cross and having beneath it a Dragon.*

And besides this, he caused to be painted on a lofty tablet, and set up in the front of the portico of his palace, so as to be visible to all, a representation of the salutary sign placed above his head, and below it that hateful and savage adversary of mankind, who by means of the tyranny of the ungodly had wasted the Church of God, falling headlong, under the form of a dragon, to the abyss of destruction. For the sacred oracles in the books of God's prophets have described him as a dragon and a crooked serpent; and for this reason the emperor thus publicly displayed a painted resemblance of the dragon beneath his own and his children's feet, stricken through with a dart, and cast headlong into the depths of the sea.

In this manner he intended to represent the secret adversary of the human race, and to indicate that he was consigned to the gulf of perdition by virtue of the salutary trophy placed above his head. This allegory, then, was thus conveyed by means of the colors of a picture; and I am filled with wonder at the intellectual greatness of the emperor, who as if by divine inspiration thus expressed what the prophets had foretold concerning this monster, saying that "God would bring his great and strong and terrible sword against the dragon, the flying serpent; and would destroy the dragon that was in the sea." This it was of which the emperor gave a true and faithful representation in the picture above described.

Chapter IV—*A Farther Notice of the Controversies raised in Egypt by Arius.*

In such occupations as these he employed himself with pleasure; but

the effects of that envious spirit which so troubled the peace of the churches of God in Alexandria, together with the Theban and Egyptian schism, continued to cause him no little disturbance of mind. For in fact, in every city bishops were engaged in obstinate conflict with bishops, and people rising against people; and almost like the fabled Symplegades[36], coming into violent collision with each other. Nay, some were so far transported beyond the bounds of reason as to be guilty of reckless and outrageous conduct, and even to insult the statues of the emperor. This state of things had little power to excite his anger, but rather caused in him sorrow of spirit; for he deeply deplored the folly thus exhibited by deranged men.

Chapter V—*Of the Disagreement respecting the Celebration of Easter.*

But before this time another most virulent disorder had existed, and long afflicted the Church; I mean the difference respecting the salutary feast of Easter. For while one party asserted that the Jewish custom should be adhered to, the other affirmed that the exact recurrence of the period should be observed, without following the authority of those who were in error, and strangers to gospel grace.

Accordingly, the people being thus in every place divided in respect of this, and the sacred observances of religion confounded for a long period (insomuch that the diversity of judgment in regard to the time for celebrating one and the same feast caused the greatest disagreement between those who kept it, some afflicting themselves with fastings and austerities, while others devoted their time to festive relaxation), no one appeared who was capable of devising a remedy for the evil, because the controversy continued equally balanced between both parties. To God alone, the Almighty, was the healing of these differences an easy task; and Constantine appeared to be the only one on earth capable of being his minister for this good end. For as soon as he was made acquainted with the facts which I have described, and perceived that his letter to the

[36] The famous rocks in the Euxine which were wont to close against one another and crush all passing ships, and by which the Argo was said (*Od.* 12. 69) to be the only ship which ever passed in safety.

Alexandrian Christians had failed to produce its due effect, he at once aroused the energies of his mind, and declared that he must prosecute to the utmost this war also against the secret adversary who was disturbing the peace of the Church.

Chapter VI—*How he ordered a Council to be held at Nicæa.*

Then as if to bring a divine array against this enemy, he convoked a general council, and invited the speedy attendance of bishops from all quarters, in letters expressive of the honorable estimation in which he held them. Nor was this merely the issuing of a bare command but the emperor's good will contributed much to its being carried into effect; for he allowed some the use of the public means of conveyance, while he afforded to others an ample supply of horses for their transport. The place, too, selected for the synod, the city Nicæa in Bithynia (named from "*Victory*"), was appropriate to the occasion. As soon then as the imperial injunction was generally made known, all with the utmost willingness hastened thither, as though they would outstrip one another in a race; for they were impelled by the anticipation of a happy result to the conference, by the hope of enjoying present peace, and the desire of beholding something new and strange in the person of so admirable an emperor. Now when they were all assembled, it appeared evident that the proceeding was the work of God, inasmuch as men who had been most widely separated, not merely in sentiment but also personally, and by difference of country, place, and nation, were here brought together, and comprised within the walls of a single city, forming as it were a vast garland of priests, composed of a variety of the choicest flowers.

Chapter VII—*Of the General Council, at which Bishops from all Nations were Present.*

In effect, the most distinguished of God's ministers from all the churches which abounded in Europe, Lybia, and Asia were here assembled. And a single house of prayer, as though divinely enlarged, sufficed to contain at once Syrians and Cilicians, Phœnicians and Arabians, delegates from Palestine, and others from Egypt; Thebans and Libyans, with those

who came from the region of Mesopotamia. A Persian bishop too was present at this conference, nor was even a Scythian found wanting to the number. Pontus, Galatia, and Pamphylia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Phrygia, furnished their most distinguished prelates; while those who dwelt in the remotest districts of Thrace and Macedonia, of Achaia and Epirus, were notwithstanding in attendance. Even from Spain itself, one whose fame was widely spread took his seat as an individual in the great assembly[37]. The prelate of the imperial city[38] was prevented from attending by extreme old age; but his presbyters were present, and supplied his place. Constantine is the first prince of any age who bound together such a garland as this with the bond of peace, and presented it to his Saviour as a thank-offering for the victories he had obtained over every foe, thus exhibiting in our own times a similitude of the apostolic company.

Chapter VIII—*That the Assembly was composed, as in the Acts of the Apostles, of Individuals from Various Nations.*

For it is said that in the Apostles' age, there were gathered "devout men from every nation under heaven"; among whom were Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and the parts of Libya about Cyrene; and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians. But that assembly was less, in that not all who composed it were ministers of God; but in the present company, the number of bishops exceeded two hundred and fifty[39], while that of the presbyters and deacons in their train, and the crowd of acolytes and other attendants was altogether beyond computation.

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[37] [Hosius of Cordova—*Bag.*]

[38] [It has been doubted whether Rome or Constantinople is here intended. The authority of Sozomen and others is in favor of the former—*Bag.*].

[39] The number present is given variously as three hundred (Socrates), three hundred and eighteen (Athanasius, &c.), two hundred and seventy (Theodoret), or even two thousand (cf. Hefele). It has been conjectured that the variation came from the omission of names of the Arians (cf. note of Heinichen, Vol. 3, p. 506–507), or that it varied during the two months and more.

Chapter IX—*Of the Virtue and Age of the Two Hundred and Fifty Bishops.*

Of these ministers of God, some were distinguished by wisdom and eloquence, others by the gravity of their lives, and by patient fortitude of character, while others again united in themselves all these graces. There were among them men whose years demanded veneration; others were younger, and in the prime of mental vigor; and some had but recently entered on the course of their ministry. For the maintenance of all ample provision was daily furnished by the emperor's command.

Chapter X—*Council in the Palace. Constantine, entering, took his Seat in the Assembly.*

Now when the appointed day arrived on which the council met for the final solution of the questions in dispute, each member was present for this in the central building of the palace[40], which appeared to exceed the rest in magnitude. On each side of the interior of this were many seats disposed in order, which were occupied by those who had been invited to attend, according to their rank. As soon, then, as the whole assembly had seated themselves with becoming orderliness, a general silence prevailed, in expectation of the emperor's arrival. And first of all, three of his immediate family entered in succession, then others also preceded his approach, not of the soldiers or guards who usually accompanied him, but only friends in the faith. And now, all rising at the signal which indicated the emperor's entrance, at last he himself proceeded through the midst of the assembly, like some heavenly messenger of God, clothed in raiment which glittered as it were with rays of light, reflecting the glowing radiance of a purple robe, and adorned with the brilliant splendor of gold and precious stones. Such was the external appearance of his person; and with regard to his mind, it was evident that he was distinguished by piety and godly fear. This was indicated by his downcast eyes, the blush on his countenance, and his gait. For the rest of his personal excellencies, he surpassed all present in height of

[40] [Hence it seems probable that this was the last day of the Council; the entire session of which occupied more than two months, and which was originally held in a church—*Bag.*] The exact dates of the Council are controverted, but it seems that it ended August 25, having probably begun June 14.

stature and beauty of form, as well as in majestic dignity of mien, and invincible strength and vigor. All these graces, united to a suavity of manner, and a serenity becoming his imperial station, declared the excellence of his mental qualities to be above all praise. As soon as he had advanced to the upper end of the seats, at first he remained standing, and when a low chair of wrought gold had been set for him, he waited until the bishops had beckoned to him, and then sat down, and after him the whole assembly did the same.

Chapter XI—*Silence of the Council, after Some Words by the Bishop Eusebius.*

The bishop who occupied the chief place in the right division of the assembly then rose, and, addressing the emperor, delivered a concise speech, in a strain of thanksgiving to Almighty God on his behalf. When he had resumed his seat, silence ensued, and all regarded the emperor with fixed attention; on which he looked serenely round on the assembly with a cheerful aspect, and, having collected his thoughts, in a calm and gentle tone gave utterance to the following words.

Chapter XII—*Constantine's Address to the Council concerning Peace.*

"It was once my chief desire, dearest friends, to enjoy the spectacle of your united presence; and now that this desire is fulfilled, I feel myself bound to render thanks to God the universal King, because, in addition to all his other benefits, he has granted me a blessing higher than all the rest, in permitting me to see you not only all assembled together, but all united in a common harmony of sentiment. I pray therefore that no malignant adversary may henceforth interfere to mar our happy state; I pray that, now the impious hostility of the tyrants has been forever removed by the power of God our Saviour, that spirit who delights in evil may devise no other means for exposing the divine law to blasphemous calumny; for, in my judgment, intestine strife within the Church of God, is far more evil and dangerous than any kind of war or conflict; and these our differences appear to me more grievous than any outward trouble. Accordingly, when, by the will and with the co-operation of God, I had been victorious over my

enemies, I thought that nothing more remained but to render thanks to him, and sympathize in the joy of those whom he had restored to freedom through my instrumentality; as soon as I heard that intelligence which I had least expected to receive, I mean the news of your dissension, I judged it to be of no secondary importance, but with the earnest desire that a remedy for this evil also might be found through my means, I immediately sent to require your presence. And now I rejoice in beholding your assembly; but I feel that my desires will be most completely fulfilled when I can see you all united in one judgment, and that common spirit of peace and concord prevailing amongst you all, which it becomes you, as consecrated to the service of God, to commend to others. Delay not, then, dear friends; delay not, ye ministers of God, and faithful servants of him who is our common Lord and Saviour; begin from this moment to discard the causes of that disunion which has existed among you, and remove the perplexities of controversy by embracing the principles of peace. For by such conduct you will at the same time be acting in a manner most pleasing to the supreme God, and you will confer an exceeding favor on me who am your fellow-servant."

Chapter XIII—*How he led the Dissentient Bishops to Harmony of Sentiment.*

As soon as the emperor had spoken these words in the Latin tongue, which another interpreted, he gave permission to those who presided in the council to deliver their opinions. On this some began to accuse their neighbors, who defended themselves, and recriminated in their turn. In this manner numberless assertions were put forth by each party, and a violent controversy arose at the very commencement. Notwithstanding this, the emperor gave patient audience to all alike, and received every proposition with steadfast attention, and by occasionally assisting the argument of each party in turn, he gradually disposed even the most vehement disputants to a reconciliation. At the same time, by the affability of his address to all, and his use of the Greek language, with which he was not altogether unacquainted, he appeared in a truly attractive and amiable light, persuading some, convincing others by his reasonings, praising those who spoke well, and urging all to unity of sentiment, until at last he succeeded in bringing them to

one mind and judgment respecting every disputed question.

Chapter XIV—*Unanimous Declaration of the Council concerning Faith, and the Celebration of Easter.*

The result was that they were not only united as concerning the faith, but that the time for the celebration of the salutary feast of Easter was agreed on by all. Those points also which were sanctioned by the resolution of the whole body were committed to writing, and received the signature of each several member. Then the emperor, believing that he had thus obtained a second victory over the adversary of the Church, proceeded to solemnize a triumphal festival in honor of God.

Chapter XV—*How Constantine entertained the Bishops on the Occasion of His Vicennalia.*

About this time he completed the twentieth year of his reign. On this occasion public festivals were celebrated by the people of the provinces generally, but the emperor himself invited and feasted with those ministers of God whom he had reconciled, and thus offered as it were through them a suitable sacrifice to God. Not one of the bishops was wanting at the imperial banquet, the circumstances of which were splendid beyond description. Detachments of the body-guard and other troops surrounded the entrance of the palace with drawn swords, and through the midst of these the men of God proceeded without fear into the innermost of the imperial apartments, in which some were the emperor's own companions at table, while others reclined on couches arranged on either side. One might have thought that a picture of Christ's kingdom was thus shadowed forth, and a dream rather than reality.

Chapter XVI—*Presents to the Bishops, and Letters to the People generally.*

After the celebration of this brilliant festival, the emperor courteously received all his guests, and generously added to the favors he had already bestowed by personally presenting gifts to each individual according to his rank. He also gave information of the proceedings of the synod to those

who had not been present, by a letter in his own hand-writing. And this letter also I will inscribe as it were on some monument by inserting it in this my narrative of his life. It was as follows:

Chapter XVII—*Constantine's Letter to the Churches respecting the Council at Nicæa.*

"Constantinus Augustus, to the Churches.

"Having had full proof, in the general prosperity of the empire, how great the favor of God has been towards us, I have judged that it ought to be the first object of my endeavors, that unity of faith, sincerity of love, and community of feeling in regard to the worship of Almighty God, might be preserved among the highly favored multitude who compose the Catholic Church. And, inasmuch as this object could not be effectually and certainly secured, unless all, or at least the greater number of the bishops were to meet together, and a discussion of all particulars relating to our most holy religion to take place; for this reason as numerous an assembly as possible has been convened, at which I myself was present, as one among yourselves (and far be it from me to deny that which is my greatest joy, that I am your fellow-servant), and every question received due and full examination, until that judgment which God, who sees all things, could approve, and which tended to unity and concord, was brought to light, so that no room was left for further discussion or controversy in relation to the faith.

Chapter XVIII—*He speaks of their Unanimity respecting the Feast of Easter, and against the Practice of the Jews.*

"At this meeting the question concerning the most holy day of Easter was discussed, and it was resolved by the united judgment of all present, that this feast ought to be kept by all and in every place on one and the same day. For what can be more becoming or honorable to us than that this feast from which we date our hopes of immortality, should be observed unfailingly by all alike, according to one ascertained order and arrangement? And first of all, it appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin, and are,

therefore, deservedly afflicted with blindness of soul. For we have it in our power, if we abandon their custom, to prolong the due observance of this ordinance to future ages, by a truer order, which we have preserved from the very day of the passion until the present time. Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd; for we have received from our Saviour a different way. A course at once legitimate and honorable lies open to our most holy religion. Beloved brethren, let us with one consent adopt this course, and withdraw ourselves from all participation in their baseness. For their boast is absurd indeed, that it is not in our power without instruction from them to observe these things. For how should they be capable of forming a sound judgment, who, since their parricidal guilt in slaying their Lord, have been subject to the direction, not of reason, but of ungoverned passion, and are swayed by every impulse of the mad spirit that is in them? Hence it is that on this point as well as others they have no perception of the truth, so that, being altogether ignorant of the true adjustment of this question, they sometimes celebrate Easter twice in the same year. Why then should we follow those who are confessedly in grievous error? Surely we shall never consent to keep this feast a second time in the same year. But supposing these reasons were not of sufficient weight, still it would be incumbent on your Sagacities to strive and pray continually that the purity of your souls may not seem in anything to be sullied by fellowship with the customs of these most wicked men. We must consider, too, that a discordant judgment in a case of such importance, and respecting such religious festival, is wrong. For our Saviour has left us one feast in commemoration of the day of our deliverance, I mean the day of his most holy passion; and he has willed that his Catholic Church should be one, the members of which, however scattered in many and diverse places, are yet cherished by one pervading spirit, that is, by the will of God. And let your Holinesses' sagacity reflect how grievous and scandalous it is that on the self-same days some should be engaged in fasting, others in festive enjoyment; and again, that after the days of Easter some should be present at banquets and amusements, while others are fulfilling the appointed fasts. It is, then, plainly the will of Divine Providence (as I suppose you all clearly see), that this usage should receive fitting correction, and be reduced to one uniform rule.

Chapter XIX—*Exhortation to follow the Example of the Greater Part of the World.*

"Since, therefore, it was needful that this matter should be rectified, so that we might have nothing in common with that nation of parricides who slew their Lord; and since that arrangement is consistent with propriety which is observed by all the churches of the western, southern, and northern parts of the world, and by some of the eastern also; for these reasons all are unanimous on this present occasion in thinking it worthy of adoption. And I myself have undertaken that this decision should meet with the approval of your Sagacities, in the hope that your Wisdoms will gladly admit that practice which is observed at once in the city of Rome, and in Africa; throughout Italy, and in Egypt, in Spain, the Gauls, Britain, Libya, and the whole of Greece; in the dioceses of Asia and Pontus, and in Cilicia, with entire unity of judgment. And you will consider not only that the number of churches is far greater in the regions I have enumerated than in any other, but also that it is most fitting that all should unite in desiring that which sound reason appears to demand, and in avoiding all participation in the perjured conduct of the Jews. In fine, that I may express my meaning in as few words as possible, it has been determined by the common judgment of all, that the most holy feast of Easter should be kept on one and the same day. For on the one hand a discrepancy of opinion on so sacred a question is unbecoming, and on the other it is surely best to act on a decision which is free from strange folly and error.

Chapter XX—*Exhortation to obey the Decrees of the Council.*

"Receive, then, with all willingness this truly Divine injunction, and regard it as in truth the gift of God. For whatever is determined in the holy assemblies of the bishops is to be regarded as indicative of the Divine will. As soon, therefore, as you have communicated these proceedings to all our beloved brethren, you are bound from that time forward to adopt for yourselves, and to enjoin on others the arrangement above mentioned, and the due observance of this most sacred day; that whenever I come into the presence of your love, which I have long desired, I may have it in my power to celebrate the holy feast with you on the same day, and may rejoice with you on all accounts, when I behold the cruel power of Satan

removed by Divine aid through the agency of our endeavors, while your faith, and peace, and concord everywhere flourish. God preserve you, beloved brethren!"

The emperor transmitted a faithful copy of this letter to every province, wherein they who read it might discern as in a mirror the pure sincerity of his thoughts, and of his piety toward God.

Chapter XXI—*Recommendation to the Bishops, on their Departure, to Preserve Harmony.*

And now, when the council was on the point of being finally dissolved, he summoned all the bishops to meet him on an appointed day, and on their arrival addressed them in a farewell speech, in which he recommended them to be diligent in the maintenance of peace, to avoid contentious disputations, amongst themselves and not to be jealous, if any one of their number should appear pre-eminent for wisdom and eloquence, but to esteem the excellence of one a blessing common to all. On the other hand he reminded them that the more gifted should forbear to exalt themselves to the prejudice of their humbler brethren, since it is God's prerogative to judge of real superiority. Rather should they considerately condescend to the weaker, remembering that absolute perfection in any case is a rare quality indeed. Each then, should be willing to accord indulgence to the other for slight offenses, to regard charitably and pass over mere human weaknesses; holding mutual harmony in the highest honor, that no occasion of mockery might be given by their dissensions to those who are ever ready to blaspheme the word of God; whom indeed we should do all in our power to save, and this cannot be unless our conduct seems to them attractive. But you are well aware of the fact that testimony is by no means productive of blessing to all, since some who hear are glad to secure the supply of their mere bodily necessities, while others court the patronage of their superiors; some fix their affection on those who treat them with hospitable kindness, others again, being honored with presents, love their benefactors in return; but few are they who really desire the word of testimony, and rare indeed is it to find a friend of truth. Hence the necessity of endeavoring to meet the case of all, and, physician-like, to administer to each that which may tend to the health of the soul, to the end that the saving doctrine may be fully

honored by all. Of this kind was the former part of his exhortation; and in conclusion he enjoined them to offer diligent supplications to God on his behalf. Having thus taken leave of them, he gave them all permission to return to their respective countries; and this they did with joy, and thenceforward that unity of judgment at which they had arrived in the emperor's presence continued to prevail, and those who had long been divided were bound together as members of the same body.

Chapter XXII—*How he dismissed Some, and wrote Letters to Others; also his Presents.*

Full of joy therefore at this success, the emperor presented as it were pleasant fruits in the way of letters to those who had not been present at the council. He commanded also that ample gifts of money should be bestowed on all the people, both in the country and the cities, being pleased thus to honor the festive occasion of the twentieth anniversary of his reign.

Chapter XXIII—*How he wrote to the Egyptians, exhorting them to Peace.*

And now, when all else were at peace, among the Egyptians alone an implacable contention still raged, so as once more to disturb the emperor's tranquility, though not to excite his anger. For indeed he treated the contending parties with all respect, as fathers, nay rather, as prophets of God; and again he summoned them to his presence, and again patiently acted as mediator between them, and honored them with gifts, and communicated also the result of his arbitration by letter. He confirmed and sanctioned the decrees of the council, and called on them to strive earnestly for concord, and not to distract and rend the Church, but to keep before them the thought of God's judgment. And these injunctions the emperor sent by a letter written with his own hand.

Chapter XXIV—*How he wrote Frequent Letters of a Religious Character to the Bishops and People.*

But besides these, his writings are very numerous on kindred subjects, and he was the author of a multitude of letters, some to the bishops, in

which he laid injunctions on them tending to the advantage of the churches of God; and sometimes the thrice blessed one addressed the people of the churches generally, calling them his own brethren and fellow-servants. But perhaps we may hereafter find leisure to collect these despatches in a separate form, in order that the integrity of our present history may not be impaired by their insertion.

Chapter XXV—*How he ordered the Erection of a Church at Jerusalem, in the Holy Place of our Saviour's Resurrection.*

After these things, the pious emperor addressed himself to another work truly worthy of record, in the province of Palestine. What then was this work? He judged it incumbent on him to render the blessed locality of our Saviour's resurrection an object of attraction and veneration to all. He issued immediate injunctions, therefore, for the erection in that spot of a house of prayer; and this he did, not on the mere natural impulse of his own mind, but being moved in spirit by the Saviour himself.

Chapter XXVI—*That the Holy Sepulchre had been covered with Rubbish and with Idols by the Ungodly.*

For it had been in time past the endeavor of impious men (or rather let me say of the whole race of evil spirits through their means), to consign to the darkness of oblivion that divine monument of immortality to which the radiant angel had descended from heaven, and rolled away the stone for those who still had stony hearts, and who supposed that the living One still lay among the dead; and had declared glad tidings to the women also, and removed their stony-hearted unbelief by the conviction that he whom they sought was alive. This sacred cave, then, certain impious and godless persons had thought to remove entirely from the eyes of men, supposing in their folly that thus they should be able effectually to obscure the truth. Accordingly they brought a quantity of earth from a distance with much labor, and covered the entire spot; then, having raised this to a moderate height, they paved it with stone, concealing the holy cave beneath this massive mound. Then, as though their purpose had been effectually accomplished, they prepare on this foundation a truly dreadful sepulchre of

souls, by building a gloomy shrine of lifeless idols to the impure spirit whom they call Venus, and offering detestable oblations therein on profane and accursed altars. For they supposed that their object could not otherwise be fully attained, than by thus burying the sacred cave beneath these foul pollutions. Unhappy men! they were unable to comprehend how impossible it was that their attempt should remain unknown to him who had been crowned with victory over death, any more than the blazing sun, when he rises above the earth, and holds his wonted course through the midst of heaven, is unseen by the whole race of mankind. Indeed, his saving power, shining with still greater brightness, and illumining, not the bodies, but the souls of men, was already filling the world with the effulgence of its own light. Nevertheless, these devices of impious and wicked men against the truth had prevailed for a long time, nor had any one of the governors, or military commanders, or even of the emperors themselves ever yet appeared, with ability to abolish these daring impieties, save only that one who enjoyed the favor of the King of kings. And now, acting as he did under the guidance of the divine Spirit, he could not consent to see the sacred spot of which we have spoken, thus buried, through the devices of the adversaries, under every kind of impurity, and abandoned to forgetfulness and neglect; nor would he yield to the malice of those who had contracted this guilt, but calling on the divine aid, gave orders that the place should be thoroughly purified, thinking that the parts which had been most polluted by the enemy ought to receive special tokens, through his means, of the greatness of the divine favor. As soon, then, as his commands were issued, these engines of deceit were cast down from their proud eminence to the very ground, and the dwelling-places of error, with the statues and the evil spirits which they represented, were overthrown and utterly destroyed.

Chapter XXVII—*How Constantine commanded the Materials of the Idol Temple, and the Soil itself, to be removed at a Distance.*

Nor did the emperor's zeal stop here; but he gave further orders that the materials of what was thus destroyed, both stone and timber, should be removed and thrown as far from the spot as possible; and this command also was speedily executed. The emperor, however, was not satisfied with

having proceeded thus far; once more, fired with holy ardor, he directed that the ground itself should be dug up to a considerable depth, and the soil which had been polluted by the foul impurities of demon worship transported to a far distant place.

Chapter XXVIII—*Discovery of the Most Holy Sepulchre.*

This also was accomplished without delay. But as soon as the original surface of the ground, beneath the covering of earth, appeared, immediately, and contrary to all expectation, the venerable and hollowed monument of our Saviour's resurrection was discovered. Then indeed did this most holy cave present a faithful similitude of his return to life, in that, after lying buried in darkness, it again emerged to light, and afforded to all who came to witness the sight, a clear and visible proof of the wonders of which that spot had once been the scene, a testimony to the resurrection of the Saviour clearer than any voice could give.

Chapter XXIX—*How he wrote concerning the Erection of a Church, both to the Governors of the Provinces, and to the Bishop Macarius.*

Immediately after the transactions I have recorded, the emperor sent forth injunctions which breathed a truly pious spirit, at the same time granting ample supplies of money, and commanding that a house of prayer worthy of the worship of God should be erected near the Saviour's tomb on a scale of rich and royal greatness. This object he had indeed for some time kept in view, and had foreseen, as if by the aid of a superior intelligence, that which should afterwards come to pass. He laid his commands, therefore, on the governors of the Eastern provinces, that by an abundant and unsparing expenditure they should secure the completion of the work on a scale of noble and ample magnificence. He also despatched the following letter to the bishop who at that time presided over the church at Jerusalem, in which he clearly asserted the saving doctrine of the faith, writing in these terms.

Chapter XXX—*Constantine's Letter to Macarius respecting the Building of*

the Church of our Saviour.

"Victor Constantius, Maximus Augustus, to Macarius.

"Such is our Saviour's grace, that no power of language seems adequate to describe the wondrous circumstance to which I am about to refer. For, that the monument of his most holy Passion, so long ago buried beneath the ground, should have remained unknown for so long a series of years, until its reappearance to his servants now set free through the removal of him[41] who was the common enemy of all, is a fact which truly surpasses all admiration. For if all who are accounted wise throughout the world were to unite in their endeavors to say somewhat worthy of this event, they would be unable to attain their object in the smallest degree. Indeed, the nature of this miracle as far transcends the capacity of human reason as heavenly things are superior to human affairs. For this cause it is ever my first, and indeed my only object, that, as the authority of the truth is evincing itself daily by fresh wonders, so our souls may all become more zealous, with all sobriety and earnest unanimity, for the honor of the Divine law. I desire, therefore, especially, that you should be persuaded of that which I suppose is evident to all beside, namely, that I have no greater care than how I may best adorn with a splendid structure that sacred spot, which, under Divine direction, I have disencumbered as it were of the heavy weight of foul idol worship; a spot which has been accounted holy from the beginning in God's judgment, but which now appears holier still, since it has brought to light a clear assurance of our Saviour's passion.

Chapter XXXI—*That the Building should surpass all the Churches in the World in the Beauty of its Walls, its Columns, and Marbles.*

"It will be well, therefore, for your sagacity to make such arrangements and provision of all things needful for the work, that not only the church itself as a whole may surpass all others whatsoever in beauty, but that the details of the building may be of such a kind that the fairest structures in any city of the empire may be excelled by this. And with respect to the

[41] [Licinius appears to be meant, whose death had occurred A.D. 326, in which year the alleged discovery of the Lord's sepulchre took place—*Bag.*]

erection and decoration of the walls, this is to inform you that our friend Dracilianus, the deputy of the Prætorian Præfects, and the governor of the province, have received a charge from us. For our pious directions to them are to the effect that artificers and laborers, and whatever they shall understand from your sagacity to be needful for the advancement of the work, shall forthwith be furnished by their care. And as to the columns and marbles, whatever you shall judge, after actual inspection of the plan, to be especially precious and serviceable, be diligent to send information to us in writing, in order that whatever quantity or sort of materials we shall esteem from your letter to be needful, may be procured from every quarter, as required, for it is fitting that the most marvelous place in the world should be worthily decorated.

Chapter XXXII—*That he instructed the Governors concerning the Beautifying of the Roof; also concerning Workmen, and Materials.*

"With respect to the ceiling[42] of the church, I wish to know from you whether in your judgment it should be panel-ceiled[43], or finished with any other kind of workmanship. If the panel ceiling be adopted, it may also be ornamented with gold. For the rest, your Holiness will give information as early as possible to the before-mentioned magistrates how many laborers and artificers, and what expenditure of money is required. You will also be careful to send us a report without delay, not only respecting the marbles and columns, but the paneled ceiling also, should this appear to you to be the most beautiful form. God preserve you, beloved brother!"

Chapter XXXIII—*How the Church of our Saviour, the New Jerusalem prophesied of in Scripture, was built.*

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[42] The word used is the technical "camera," meaning properly a certain style of vaulted ceiling, but here it is perhaps the generic ceiling if the specific word below means panel ceiling.

[43] This is the word for the Lacunaria or panel ceilings, a style of ceiling where "planks were placed across these beams at certain intervals leaving hollow spaces" "which were frequently covered with gold and ivory and sometimes with paintings." Compare article *Domus,* in Smith, *Dict. Gr. and Rom. Ant.* The passage may mean either "with respect to the ceiling…whether…wainscoted" or "with respect to the Camera…whether panel ceiled."

This was the emperor's letter; and his directions were at once carried into effect. Accordingly, on the very spot which witnessed the Saviour's sufferings, a new Jerusalem was constructed, over against the one so celebrated of old, which, since the foul stain of guilt brought on it by the murder of the Lord, had experienced the last extremity of desolation, the effect of Divine judgment on its impious people. It was opposite this city that the emperor now began to rear a monument to the Saviour's victory over death, with rich and lavish magnificence. And it may be that this was that second and new Jerusalem spoken of in the predictions of the prophets, concerning which such abundant testimony is given in the divinely inspired records.

First of all, then, he adorned the sacred cave itself, as the chief part of the whole work, and the hallowed monument at which the angel radiant with light had once declared to all that regeneration which was first manifested in the Saviour's person.

Chapter XXXIV—*Description of the Structure of the Holy Sepulchre.*

This monument, therefore, first of all, as the chief part of the whole, the emperor's zealous magnificence beautified with rare columns, and profusely enriched with the most splendid decorations of every kind.

Chapter XXXV—*Description of the Atrium and Porticos.*

The next object of his attention was a space of ground of great extent, and open to the pure air of heaven. This he adorned with a pavement of finely polished stone, and enclosed it on three sides with porticos of great length.

Chapter XXXVI—*Description of the Walls, Roof, Decoration, and Gilding of the Body of the Church.*

For at the side opposite to the cave, which was the eastern side, the church itself was erected; a noble work rising to a vast height, and of great extent both in length and breadth. The interior of this structure was floored

with marble slabs of various colors; while the external surface of the walls, which shone with polished stones exactly fitted together, exhibited a degree of splendor in no respect inferior to that of marble. With regard to the roof, it was covered on the outside with lead, as a protection against the rains of winter. But the inner part of the roof, which was finished with sculptured panel work, extended in a series of connected compartments, like a vast sea, over the whole church; and, being overlaid throughout with the purest gold, caused the entire building to glitter as it were with rays of light.

Chapter XXXVII—*Description of the Double Porticos on Either Side, and of the Three Eastern Gates.*

Besides this were two porticos on each side, with upper and lower ranges of pillars, corresponding in length with the church itself; and these also had their roofs ornamented with gold. Of these porticos, those which were exterior to the church were supported by columns of great size, while those within these rested on piles of stone beautifully adorned on the surface. Three gates, placed exactly east, were intended to receive the multitudes who entered the church.

Chapter XXXVIII—*Description of the Hemisphere, the Twelve Columns, and their Bowls.*

Opposite these gates the crowning part of the whole was the hemisphere, which rose to the very summit of the church. This was encircled by twelve columns (according to the number of the apostles of our Saviour), having their capitals embellished with silver bowls of great size, which the emperor himself presented as a splendid offering to his God.

Chapter XXXIX—*Description of the Inner Court, the Arcades and Porches.*

In the next place he enclosed the atrium which occupied the space leading to the entrances in front of the church. This comprehended, first the court, then the porticos on each side, and lastly the gates of the court.

After these, in the midst of the open market-place[44], the general entrance-gates, which were of exquisite workmanship, afforded to passers-by on the outside a view of the interior which could not fail to inspire astonishment.

Chapter XL—*Of the Number of his Offerings.*

This temple, then, the emperor erected as a conspicuous monument of the Saviour's resurrection, and embellished it throughout on an imperial scale of magnificence. He further enriched it with numberless offerings of inexpressible beauty and various materials—gold, silver, and precious stones, the skillful and elaborate arrangement of which, in regard to their magnitude, number, and variety, we have not leisure at present to describe particularly.

Chapter XLI—*Of the Erection of Churches in Bethlehem, and on the Mount of Olives.*

In the same country he discovered other places, venerable as being the localities of two sacred caves; and these also he adorned with lavish magnificence. In the one case, he rendered due honor to that which had been the scene of the first manifestation of our Saviour's divine presence, when he submitted to be born in mortal flesh; while in the case of the second cavern he hallowed the remembrance of his ascension to heaven from the mountain top. And while he thus nobly testified his reverence for these places, he at the same time eternized the memory of his mother, who had been the instrument of conferring so valuable a benefit on mankind.

Chapter XLII—*That the Empress Helena, Constantine's Mother, having visited this Locality for Devotional Purposes, built these Churches.*

For she, having resolved to discharge the duties of pious devotion to the God, the King of kings, and feeling it incumbent on her to render

[44] [In front of the larger churches there was generally a street, or open space, where a market was held on the festival of the Martyr to whom the church was dedicated. Regard was also had, in this arrangement, to architectural effect, the object being that nothing should interfere with the view of the front of the church. *Vide* Valesius *in loc.*—*Bag.*]

thanksgivings with prayers on behalf both of her own son, now so mighty an emperor, and of his sons, her own grandchildren, the divinely favored Cæsars, though now advanced in years, yet gifted with no common degree of wisdom, had hastened with youthful alacrity to survey this venerable land; and at the same time to visit the eastern provinces, cities, and people, with a truly imperial solicitude. As soon, then, as she had rendered due reverence to the ground which the Saviour's feet had trodden, according to the prophetic word which says "Let us worship at the place whereon his feet have stood," she immediately bequeathed the fruit of her piety to future generations.

Chapter XLIII—*A Farther Notice of the Churches at Bethlehem.*

For without delay she dedicated two churches to the God whom she adored, one at the grotto which had been the scene of the Saviour's birth; the other on the mount of his ascension. For he who was "God with us" had submitted to be born even in a cave of the earth, and the place of his nativity was called Bethlehem by the Hebrews. Accordingly the pious empress honored with rare memorials the scene of her travail who bore this heavenly child, and beautified the sacred cave with all possible splendor. The emperor himself soon after testified his reverence for the spot by princely offerings, and added to his mother's magnificence by costly presents of silver and gold, and embroidered hangings. And farther, the mother of the emperor raised a stately structure on the Mount of Olives also, in memory of his ascent to heaven who is the Saviour of mankind, erecting a sacred church and temple on the very summit of the mount. And indeed authentic history informs us that in this very cave the Saviour imparted his secret revelations to his disciples. And here also the emperor testified his reverence for the King of kings, by diverse and costly offerings. Thus did Helena Augusta, the pious mother of a pious emperor, erect over the two mystic caverns these two noble and beautiful monuments of devotion, worthy of everlasting remembrance, to the honor of God her Saviour, and as proofs of her holy zeal, receiving from her son the aid of his imperial power. Nor was it long ere this aged woman reaped the due reward of her labors. After passing the whole period of her life, even to declining age, in the greatest prosperity, and exhibiting both in word and deed abundant

fruits of obedience to the divine precepts, and having enjoyed in consequence an easy and tranquil existence, with unimpaired powers of body and mind, at length she obtained from God an end befitting her pious course, and a recompense of her good deeds even in this present life.

Chapter XLIV—*Of Helena's Generosity and Beneficent Acts.*

For on the occasion of a circuit which she made of the eastern provinces, in the splendor of imperial authority, she bestowed abundant proofs of her liberality as well on the inhabitants of the several cities collectively, as on individuals who approached her, at the same time that she scattered largesses among the soldiery with a liberal hand. But especially abundant were the gifts she bestowed on the naked and unprotected poor. To some she gave money, to others an ample supply of clothing; she liberated some from imprisonment, or from the bitter servitude of the mines; others she delivered from unjust oppression, and others again, she restored from exile.

Chapter XLV—*Helena's Pious Conduct in the Churches.*

While, however, her character derived luster from such deeds as I have described, she was far from neglecting personal piety toward God[45]. She might be seen continually frequenting his Church, while at the same time she adorned the houses of prayer with splendid offerings, not overlooking the churches of the smallest cities. In short, this admirable woman was to be seen, in simple and modest attire, mingling with the crowd of worshipers, and testifying her devotion to God by a uniform course of pious conduct.

Chapter XLVI—*How she made her Will, and died at the Age of Eighty Years.*

And when at length at the close of a long life, she was called to inherit a happier lot, having arrived at the eightieth year of her age, and being very near the time of her departure, she prepared and executed her last will in

[45] According to some apocryphal accounts Constantine owed his conversion to his mother (compare the apocryphal letters mentioned under *Writings,* in the Prolegomena), but Eusebius, below (ch. 47), seems to reverse the fact.

favor of her only son, the emperor and sole monarch of the world, and her grandchildren, the Cæsars his sons, to whom severally she bequeathed whatever property she possessed in any part of the world. Having thus made her will, this thrice blessed woman died in the presence of her illustrious son, who was in attendance at her side, caring for her and held her hands; so that, to those who rightly discerned the truth, the thrice blessed one seemed not to die, but to experience a real change and transition from an earthly to a heavenly existence, since her soul, remoulded as it were into an incorruptible and angelic essence[46], was received up into her Saviour's presence[47].

Chapter XLVII—*How Constantine buried his Mother, and how he honored her during her Life.*

Her body, too, was honored with special tokens of respect, being escorted on its way to the imperial city by a vast train of guards, and there deposited in a royal tomb. Such were the last days of our emperor's mother, a person worthy of being had in perpetual remembrance, both for her own practical piety, and because she had given birth to so extraordinary and admirable an offspring. And well may his character be styled blessed, for his filial piety as well as on other grounds. He rendered her through his influence so devout a worshiper of God, (though she had not previously been such,) that she seemed to have been instructed from the first by the Saviour of mankind; and besides this, he had honored her so fully with imperial dignities, that in every province, and in the very ranks of the soldiery, she was spoken of under the titles of Augusta and empress, and her likeness was impressed on golden coins[48]. He had even granted her authority over the imperial treasures, to use and dispense them according to her own will and discretion in every case; for this enviable distinction also she

[46] [These words seem to savor of Origen's doctrine, to which Eusebius was much addicted. Origen believed that, in the resurrection, bodies would be changed into souls, and souls into angels, according to the testimony of Jerome. See Valesius *in loc.*—*Bag.*]

[47] The date of Helena's death is usually placed in 327 or 328. Compare Wordsworth, l.c. Since she was eighty years old at the time of her death she must have been about twenty-five when Constantine was born.

[48] Compare note above. It is said (Wordsworth) that while silver and copper coins have been found with her name, none of gold have yet come to light.

received at the hands of her son. Hence it is that among the qualities which shed a luster on his memory, we may rightly include that surpassing degree of filial affection whereby he rendered full obedience to the Divine precepts which enjoin due honor from children to their parents. In this manner, then, the emperor executed in Palestine the noble works I have above described; and indeed in every province he raised new churches on a far more imposing scale than those which had existed before his time.

Chapter XLVIII—*How he built Churches in Honor of Martyrs, and abolished Idolatry at Constantinople.*

And being fully resolved to distinguish the city which bore his name with especial honor, he embellished it with numerous sacred edifices, both memorials of martyrs on the largest scale, and other buildings of the most splendid kind, not only within the city itself, but in its vicinity; and thus at the same time he rendered honor to the memory of the martyrs, and consecrated his city to the martyrs' God. Being filled, too, with Divine wisdom, he determined to purge the city which was to be distinguished by his own name from idolatry of every kind, that henceforth no statues might be worshiped there in the temples of those falsely reputed to be gods, nor any altars defiled by the pollution of blood; that there might be no sacrifices consumed by fire, no demon festivals, nor any of the other ceremonies usually observed by the superstitious.

Chapter XLIX—*Representation of the Cross in the Palace, and of Daniel at the Public Fountains.*

On the other hand one might see the fountains in the midst of the market place graced with figures representing the good Shepherd, well known to those who study the sacred oracles, and that of Daniel also with the lions, forged in brass, and resplendent with plates of gold. Indeed, so large a measure of Divine love possessed the emperor's soul, that in the principal apartment of the imperial palace itself, on a vast tablet[49] displayed in the center of its gold-covered paneled ceiling, he caused the symbol of

[49] Perhaps the largest "panel." The restored church of St. Paul, outside the walls at Rome, has a paneled ceiling with a very large central panel.

our Saviour's Passion to be fixed, composed of a variety of precious stones richly inwrought with gold. This symbol he seemed to have intended to be as it were the safeguard of the empire itself.

Chapter L—*That he erected Churches in Nicomedia, and in Other Cities.*

Having thus embellished the city which bore his name, he next distinguished the capital of Bithynia[50] by the erection of a stately and magnificent church, being desirous of raising in this city also, in honor of his Saviour and at his own charges, a memorial of his victory over his own enemies and the adversaries of God. He also decorated the principal cities of the other provinces with sacred edifices of great beauty; as, for example, in the case of that metropolis of the East which derived its name from Antiochus, in which, as the head of that portion of the empire, he consecrated to the service of God a church of unparalleled size and beauty. The entire building was encompassed by an enclosure of great extent, within which the church itself rose to a vast elevation, being of an octagonal form, and surrounded on all sides by many chambers, courts, and upper and lower apartments; the whole richly adorned with a profusion of gold, brass, and other materials of the most costly kind.

Chapter LI—*That he ordered a Church to be built at Mambre.*

Such was the principal sacred edifices erected by the emperor's command. But having heard that the self-same Saviour who erewhile had appeared on earth had in ages long since past afforded a manifestation of his Divine presence to holy men of Palestine near the oak of Mambre, he ordered that a house of prayer should be built there also in honor of the God who had thus appeared. Accordingly the imperial commission was transmitted to the provincial governors by letters addressed to them individually, enjoining a speedy completion of the appointed work. He sent moreover to the writer of this history an eloquent admonition, a copy of which I think it well to insert in the present work, in order to convey a just idea of his pious diligence and zeal. To express, then, his displeasure at the evil

[50] [Nicomedia, where Constantine had besieged Licinius, and compelled him to surrender; in memory of which event he built this church—*Bag.*]

practices which he had heard were usual in the place just referred to, he addressed me in the following terms.

Chapter LII—*Constantine's Letter to Eusebius concerning Mambre.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to Macarius, and the rest of the bishops in Palestine.

"One benefit, and that of no ordinary importance, has been conferred on us by my truly pious mother-in-law[51], in that she has made known to us by letter that abandoned folly of impious men which has hitherto escaped detection by you; so that the criminal conduct thus overlooked may now through our means obtain fitting correction and remedy, necessary though tardy. For surely it is a grave impiety indeed, that holy places should be defiled by the stain of unhallowed impurities. What then is this, dearest brethren, which, though it has eluded your sagacity, she of whom I speak was impelled by a pious sense of duty to disclose?

Chapter LIII—*That the Saviour appeared in this Place to Abraham.*

"She assures me, then, that the place which takes its name from the oak of Mambre, where we find that Abraham dwelt, is defiled by certain of the slaves of superstition in every possible way. She declares that idols which should be utterly destroyed have been erected on the site of that tree; that an altar is near the spot; and that impure sacrifices are continually performed. Now since it is evident that these practices are equally inconsistent with the character of our times, and unworthy the sanctity of the place itself, I wish your Gravities to be informed that the illustrious Count Acacius, our friend, has received instructions by letter from me, to the effect that every idol which shall be found in the place above-mentioned shall immediately be consigned to the flames; that the altar be utterly demolished; and that if any one, after this our mandate, shall be guilty of impiety of any kind in this place, he shall be visited with condign punishment. The place itself we have directed to be adorned with an unpolluted structure, I mean a church; in order that it may become a fitting place of assembly for holy

[51] [Eutropia, mother of his empress Fausta—*Bag.*]

men. Meantime, should any breach of these our commands occur, it should be made known to our clemency without the least delay by letters from you, that we may direct the person detected to be dealt with, as a transgressor of the law, in the severest manner. For you are not ignorant that the Supreme God first appeared to Abraham, and conversed with him, in that place. There it was that the observance of the Divine law first began; there first the Saviour himself, with the two angels, vouchsafed to Abraham a manifestation of his presence; there God first appeared to men; there he gave promise to Abraham concerning his future seed, and straightway fulfilled that promise; there he foretold that he should be the father of a multitude of nations. For these reasons, it seems to me right that this place should not only be kept pure through your diligence from all defilement, but restored also to its pristine sanctity; that nothing hereafter may be done there except the performance of fitting service to him who is the Almighty God, and our Saviour, and Lord of all. And this service it is incumbent on you to care for with due attention, if your Gravities be willing (and of this I feel confident) to gratify my wishes, which are especially interested in the worship of God. May he preserve you, beloved brethren!"

Chapter LIV—*Destruction of Idol Temples and Images everywhere.*

All these things the emperor diligently performed to the praise of the saving power of Christ, and thus made it his constant aim to glorify his Saviour God. On the other hand he used every means to rebuke the superstitious errors of the heathen. Hence the entrances of their temples in the several cities were left exposed to the weather, being stripped of their doors at his command; the tiling of others was removed, and their roofs destroyed. From others again the venerable statues of brass, of which the superstition of antiquity had boasted for a long series of years, were exposed to view in all the public places of the imperial city; so that here a Pythian, there a Sminthian Apollo, excited the contempt of the beholder; while the Delphic tripods were deposited in the hippodrome and the Muses of Helicon in the palace itself. In short, the city which bore his name was everywhere filled with brazen statues of the most exquisite workmanship, which had been dedicated in every province, and which the deluded victims

of superstition had long vainly honored as gods with numberless victims and burnt sacrifices, though now at length they learnt to renounce their error, when the emperor held up the very objects of their worship to be the ridicule and sport of all beholders. With regard to those images which were of gold, he dealt with them in a different manner. For as soon as he understood that the ignorant multitudes were inspired with a vain and childish dread of these bugbears of error, wrought in gold and silver, he judged it right to remove these also, like stumbling-stones thrown in the way of men walking in the dark, and henceforward to open a royal road, plain and unobstructed to all. Having formed this resolution, he considered no soldiers or military force of any sort needful for the suppression of the evil; a few of his own friends sufficed for this service, and these he sent by a simple expression of his will to visit each several province. Accordingly, sustained by confidence in the emperor's pious intentions and their own personal devotion to God, they passed through the midst of numberless tribes and nations, abolishing this ancient error in every city and country. They ordered the priests themselves, amidst general laughter and scorn, to bring their gods from their dark recesses to the light of day; they then stripped them of their ornaments, and exhibited to the gaze of all the unsightly reality which had been hidden beneath a painted exterior. Lastly, whatever part of the material appeared valuable they scraped off and melted in the fire to prove its worth, after which they secured and set apart whatever they judged needful for their purpose, leaving to the superstitious worshipers that which was altogether useless, as a memorial of their shame. Meanwhile our admirable prince was himself engaged in a work similar to what we have described. For at the same time that these costly images of the dead were stripped, as we have said, of their precious materials, he also attacked those composed of brass; causing those to be dragged from their places with ropes and as it were carried away captive, whom the dotage of mythology had esteemed as gods.

Chapter LV—*Overthrow of an Idol Temple, and Abolition of Licentious Practices, at Aphaca in Phœnicia.*

The emperor's next care was to kindle, as it were, a brilliant torch, by the light of which he directed his imperial gaze around, to see if any hidden

vestiges of error might still exist. And as the keen-sighted eagle in its heavenward flight is able to descry from its lofty height the most distant objects on the earth, so did he, while residing in the imperial palace of his own fair city, discover as from a watch-tower a hidden and fatal snare of souls in the province of Phœnicia. This was a grove and temple, not situated in the midst of any city, nor in any public place, as for splendor of effect is generally the case, but apart from the beaten and frequented road, at Aphaca, on part of the summit of Mount Lebanon, and dedicated to the foul demon known by the name of Venus. It was a school of wickedness for all the votaries of impurity, and such as destroyed their bodies with effeminacy. Here men undeserving of the name forgot the dignity of their sex, and propitiated the demon by their effeminate conduct; here too unlawful commerce of women and adulterous intercourse, with other horrible and infamous practices, were perpetrated in this temple as in a place beyond the scope and restraint of law. Meantime these evils remained unchecked by the presence of any observer, since no one of fair character ventured to visit such scenes. These proceedings, however, could not escape the vigilance of our august emperor, who, having himself inspected them with characteristic forethought, and judging that such a temple was unfit for the light of heaven, gave orders that the building with its offerings should be utterly destroyed. Accordingly, in obedience to the imperial command, these engines of an impure superstition were immediately abolished, and the hand of military force was made instrumental in purging the place. And now those who had heretofore lived without restraint learned self-control through the emperor's threat of punishment, as likewise those superstitious Gentiles wise in their own conceit, who now obtained experimental proof of their own folly.

Chapter LVI—*Destruction of the Temple of Æsculapius at Ægæ.*

For since a wide-spread error of these pretenders to wisdom concerned the demon worshiped in Cilicia, whom thousands regarded with reverence as the possessor of saving and healing power, who sometimes appeared to those who passed the night in his temple, sometimes restored the diseased to health, though on the contrary he was a destroyer of souls, who drew his easily deluded worshipers from the true Saviour to involve them in

impious error, the emperor, consistently with his practice, and desire to advance the worship of him who is at once a jealous God and the true Saviour, gave directions that this temple also should be razed to the ground. In prompt obedience to this command, a band of soldiers laid this building, the admiration of noble philosophers, prostrate in the dust, together with its unseen inmate, neither demon nor god, but rather a deceiver of souls, who had seduced mankind for so long a time through various ages. And thus he who had promised to others deliverance from misfortune and distress, could find no means for his own security, any more than when, as is told in myth, he was scorched by the lightning's stroke. Our emperor's pious deeds, however, had in them nothing fabulous or feigned; but by virtue of the manifested power of his Saviour, this temple as well as others was so utterly overthrown, that not a vestige of the former follies was left behind.

Chapter LVII—*How the Gentiles abandoned Idol Worship, and turned to the Knowledge of God.*

Hence it was that, of those who had been the slaves of superstition, when they saw with their own eyes the exposure of their delusion, and beheld the actual ruin of the temples and images in every place, some applied themselves to the saving doctrine of Christ; while others, though they declined to take this step, yet reprobated the folly which they had received from their fathers, and laughed to scorn what they had so long been accustomed to regard as gods. Indeed, what other feelings could possess their minds, when they witnessed the thorough uncleanness concealed beneath the fair exterior of the objects of their worship? Beneath this were found either the bones of dead men or dry skulls, fraudulently adorned by the arts of magicians, or filthy rags full of abominable impurity, or a bundle of hay or stubble. On seeing all these things heaped together within their lifeless images, they denounced their fathers' extreme folly and their own, especially when neither in the secret recesses of the temples nor in the statues themselves could any inmate be found; neither demon, nor utterer of oracles, neither god nor prophet, as they had heretofore supposed; nay, not even a dim and shadowy phantom could be seen. Accordingly, every gloomy cavern, every hidden recess, afforded easy access to the emperor's

emissaries; the inaccessible and secret chambers, the innermost shrines of the temples, were trampled by the soldiers' feet; and thus the mental blindness which had prevailed for so many ages over the gentile world became clearly apparent to the eyes of all.

Chapter LVIII—*How he destroyed the Temple of Venus at Heliopolis, and built the First Church in that City.*

Such actions as I have described may well be reckoned among the emperor's noblest achievements, as also the wise arrangements which he made respecting each particular province. We may instance the Phœnician city Heliopolis, in which those who dignify licentious pleasure with a distinguishing title of honor, had permitted their wives and daughters to commit shameless fornication. But now a new statute, breathing the very spirit of modesty, proceeded from the emperor, which peremptorily forbade the continuance of former practices. And besides this he sent them also written exhortations, as though he had been especially ordained by God for this end, that he might instruct all men in the principles of chastity. Hence, he disdained not to communicate by letter even with these persons, urging them to seek diligently the knowledge of God. At the same time he followed up his words by corresponding deeds, and erected even in this city a church of great size and magnificence; so that an event unheard of before in any age, now for the first time came to pass, namely, that a city which had hitherto been wholly given up to superstition now obtained the privilege of a church of God, with presbyters and deacons, and its people were placed under the presiding care of a bishop consecrated to the service of the supreme God. And further, the emperor, being anxious that here also as many as possible might be won to the truth, bestowed abundant provision for the necessities of the poor, desiring even thus to invite them to seek the doctrines of salvation, as though he were almost adopting the words of him who said, "Whether in pretense, or in truth, let Christ be preached."

Chapter LIX—*Of the Disturbance at Antioch by Eustathius.*

In the midst, however, of the general happiness occasioned by these

events, and while the Church of God was every where and every way flourishing throughout the empire, once more that spirit of envy, who ever watches for the ruin of the good, prepared himself to combat the greatness of our prosperity, in the expectation, perhaps, that the emperor himself, provoked by our tumults and disorders, might eventually become estranged from us. Accordingly, he kindled a furious controversy at Antioch, and thereby involved the church in that place in a series of tragic calamities, which had well-nigh occasioned the total overthrow of the city. The members of the Church were divided into two opposite parties; while the people, including even the magistrates and soldiery, were roused to such a pitch, that the contest would have been decided by the sword, had not the watchful providence of God, as well as dread of the emperor's displeasure, controlled the fury of the multitude. On this occasion, too, the emperor, acting the part of a preserver and physician of souls, applied with much forbearance the remedy of persuasion to those who needed it. He gently pleaded, as it were by an embassy, with his people, sending among them one of the best approved and most faithful of those who were honored with the dignity of Count; at the same time that he exhorted them to a peaceable spirit by repeated letters, and instructed them in the practice of true godliness. Having prevailed by these remonstrances, he excused their conduct in his subsequent letters, alleging that he had himself heard the merits of the case from him on whose account the disturbance had arisen[52]. And these letters of his, which are replete with learning and instruction of no ordinary kind, I should have inserted in this present work, were it not that they might affix a mark of dishonor to the character of the persons accused. I will therefore omit these, being unwilling to revive the memory of past grievances, and will only annex those to my present narrative which he wrote to testify his satisfaction at the re-establishment of peace and concord among the rest. In these letters, he cautioned them against any desire to claim the ruler of another district, through whose intervention peace had been restored, as their own, and exhorted them, consistently with the usage of the Church, to choose him as their bishop,

[52] [Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, whose deposition, on the ground of a charge of immorality, by the partisans of Eusebius of Nicomedia, had occasioned the disturbances alluded to in the text—*Bag.*] There is a view that this whole trouble was the result of an intrigue of Eusebius to get the better of Eustathius, who was in a sense a rival.

whom the common Saviour of all should point out as suited for the office. His letter, then, is addressed to the people and to the bishops, severally, in the following terms.

Chapter LX—*Constantine's Letter to the Antiochians, directing them not to withdraw Eusebius from Cæsarea, but to seek some one else.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to the people of Antioch.

"How pleasing to the wise and intelligent portion of mankind is the concord which exists among you! And I myself, brethren, am disposed to love you with an enduring affection, inspired both by religion, and by your own manner of life and zeal on my behalf. It is by the exercise of right understanding and sound discretion, that we are enabled really to enjoy our blessings. And what can become you so well as this discretion? No wonder, then, if I affirm that your maintenance of the truth has tended rather to promote your security than to draw on you the hatred of others. Indeed, amongst brethren, whom the selfsame disposition to walk in the ways of truth and righteousness promises, through the favor of God, to register among his pure and holy family, what can be more honorable than gladly to acquiesce in the prosperity of all men? Especially since the precepts of the divine law prescribe a better direction to your proposed intention, and we ourselves desire that your judgment should be confirmed by proper sanction. It may be that you are surprised, and at a loss to understand the meaning of this introduction to my present address. The cause of it I will not hesitate to explain without reserve. I confess, then, that on reading your records I perceived, by the highly eulogistic testimony which they bear to Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, whom I have myself long well known and esteemed for his learning and moderation, that you are strongly attached to him, and desire to appropriate him as your own. What thoughts, then, do you suppose that I entertain on this subject, desirous as I am to seek for and act on the strict principles of right? What anxiety do you imagine this desire of yours has caused me? O holy faith, who givest us in our Saviour's words and precepts a model, as it were, of what our life should be, how hardly wouldst thou thyself resist the sins of men, were it not that thou refusest to subserve the purposes of gain! In my own judgment, he whose first object is the maintenance of peace, seems to be superior to Victory

herself; and where a right and honorable course lies open to one's choice, surely no one would hesitate to adopt it. I ask then, brethren, why do we so decide as to inflict an injury on others by our choice? Why do we covet those objects which will destroy the credit of our own reputation? I myself highly esteem the individual whom ye judge worthy of your respect and affection; notwithstanding, it cannot be right that those principles should be entirely disregarded which should be authoritative and binding on all alike, so that each should not be content with his own circumstances, and all enjoy their proper privileges; nor can it be right, in considering the claims of rival candidates, to suppose but that not one only, but many, may appear worthy of comparison with this person. For as long as no violence or harshness are suffered to disturb the dignities of the church, they continue to be on an equal footing, and worthy of the same consideration everywhere. Nor is it reasonable that an inquiry into the qualifications of this one should be made to the detriment of others; since the judgment of all churches, whether reckoned of greater or less importance in themselves, is equally capable of receiving and maintaining the divine ordinances, so that one is in no way inferior to another, if we will but boldly declare the truth, in regard to that standard of practice which is common to all. If this be so, we must say that you will be chargeable, not with retaining this prelate, but with wrongfully removing him; your conduct will be characterized rather by violence than justice; and whatever may be generally thought by others, I dare clearly and boldly affirm that this measure will furnish ground of accusation against you, and will provoke factious disturbances of the most mischievous kind; for even timid flocks can show the use and power of their teeth, when the watchful care of their shepherd declines, and they find themselves bereft of his accustomed guidance. If this then be really so, if I am not deceived in my judgment, let this, brethren, be your first consideration, for many and important considerations will immediately present themselves, whether, should you persist in your intention, that mutual kindly feeling and affection which should subsist among you will suffer no diminution? In the next place, remember that he, who came among you for the purpose of offering disinterested counsel, now enjoys the reward which is due to him in the judgment of heaven; for he has received no ordinary recompense in the high testimony you have borne to his equitable conduct. Lastly, in accordance

with your usual sound judgment, do ye exhibit a becoming diligence in selecting the person of whom you stand in need, carefully avoiding all factious and tumultuous clamor; for such clamor is always wrong, and from the collision of discordant elements both sparks and flame will arise. I protest, as I desire to please God and you, and to enjoy a happiness commensurate with your kind wishes, that I love you, and the quiet haven of your gentleness, now that you have cast from you that which defiled, and received in its place at once sound morality and concord, firmly planting in the vessel the sacred standard, and guided, as one may say, by a helm of iron in your course onward to the light of heaven. Receive then on board that merchandise which is incorruptible, since, as it were, all bilge water has been drained from the vessel; and be careful henceforth so to secure the enjoyment of all your present blessing, that you may not seem at any future time either to have determined any measure on the impulse of inconsiderate or ill-directed zeal, or in the first instance rashly to have entered on an inexpedient course. May God preserve you, beloved brethren!"

Chapter LXI—*The Emperor's Letter to Eusebius praising him for refusing the Bishopric of Antioch.*

The Emperor's Letter to me on my refusing the Bishopric of Antioch.

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to Eusebius.

"I have most carefully perused your letter, and perceive that you have strictly conformed to the rule enjoined by the discipline of the Church. Now to abide by that which appears at the same time pleasing to God, and accordant with apostolical tradition, is a proof of true piety. You have reason to deem yourself happy on this behalf, that you are counted worthy, in the judgment, I may say, of all the world, to have the oversight of any church. For the desire which all feel to claim you for their own, undoubtedly enhances your enviable fortune in this respect. Notwithstanding, your Prudence whose resolve it is to observe the ordinances of God and the apostolic canon of the Church[53], has done excellently well in declining the bishopric of the church at Antioch, and desiring to continue in that

[53] Canon 15 (or 14) of the "Apostolical Canons." Cf. ed. Bruns. 1 (Berol. 1839), 3.

church of which you first received the oversight by the will of God. I have written on this subject to the people of Antioch, and also to your colleagues in the ministry who had themselves consulted me in regard to this question; on reading which letters, your Holiness will easily discern, that, inasmuch as justice itself opposed their claims, I have written to them under divine direction. It will be necessary that your Prudence should be present at their conference, in order that this decision may be ratified in the church at Antioch. God preserve you, beloved brother!"

Chapter LXII—*Constantine's Letter to the Council, depreciating the Removal of Eusebius from Cæsarea.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to Theodotus, Theodorus, Narcissus, Aëtius, Alpheus, and the rest of the bishops who are at Antioch.

"I have perused the letters written by your Prudences, and highly approve of the wise resolution of your colleague in the ministry, Eusebius. Having, moreover, been informed of the circumstances of the case, partly by your letters, partly by those of our illustrious counts, Acacius and Strategius, after sufficient investigation I have written to the people of Antioch, suggesting the course which will be at once pleasing to God and advantageous for the Church. A copy of this I have ordered to be subjoined to this present letter, in order that ye yourselves may know what I thought fit, as an advocate of the cause of justice, to write to that people; since I find in your letter this proposal, that, in consonance with the choice of the people, sanctioned by your own desire, Eusebius the holy bishop of Cæsarea should preside over and take the charge of the church at Antioch. Now the letters of Eusebius[54] himself on this subject appeared to be strictly accordant with the order prescribed by the Church. Nevertheless it is

[54] [George (afterwards bishop of Laodicea) appears to have been degraded from the office of presbyter on the ground of impiety, by the same bishop who had ordained him. Both George and Euphronius were of the Arian party, of which fact it is possible that Constantine was ignorant—*Bag.*] Georgius was at one time or another Arian, semi-Arian, and Anomoean, and is said to have been called by Athanasius "the most wicked of all the Arians" (Venables in Smith and Wace, *Dict.* 2. 637). He was constantly pitted against Eustathius, which ac- counts for his appearance at this time. Euphronius was the one chosen at this time.

expedient that your Prudences should be made acquainted with my opinion also. For I am informed that Euphronius the presbyter, who is a citizen of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, and George of Arethusa, likewise a presbyter, and appointed to that office by Alexander at Alexandria, are men of tried faith. It was right, therefore, to intimate to your Prudences, that in proposing these men and any others whom you may deem worthy the episcopal dignity, you should decide this question in a manner conformable to the tradition of the apostles. For in that case, your Prudences will be able, according to the rule of the Church and apostolic tradition, to direct this election in the manner which true ecclesiastical discipline shall prescribe. God preserve you, beloved brethren!"

Chapter LXIII—*How he displayed his Zeal for the Extirpation of Heresies.*

Such were the exhortations to do all things to the honor of the divine religion which the emperor addressed to the rulers of the churches. Having by these means banished dissension, and reduced the Church of God to a state of uniform harmony, he next proceeded to a different duty, feeling it incumbent on him to extirpate another sort of impious persons, as pernicious enemies of the human race. These were pests of society, who ruined whole cities under the specious garb of religious decorum; men whom our Saviour's warning voice somewhere terms false prophets and ravenous wolves; "Beware of false prophets, which will come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them." Accordingly, by an order transmitted to the governors of the several provinces, he effectually banished all such offenders. In addition to this ordinance he addressed to them personally a severely awakening admonition, exhorting them to an earnest repentance, that they might still find a haven of safety in the true Church of God. Hear, then, in what manner he addressed them in this letter.

Chapter LXIV—*Constantine's Edict against the Heretics.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to the heretics.

"Understand now, by this present statute, ye Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, Paulians, ye who are called Cataphrygians, and all ye who

devise and support heresies by means of your private assemblies, with what a tissue of falsehood and vanity, with what destructive and venomous errors, your doctrines are inseparably interwoven; so that through you the healthy soul is stricken with disease, and the living becomes the prey of everlasting death. Ye haters and enemies of truth and life, in league with destruction! All your counsels are opposed to the truth, but familiar with deeds of baseness; full of absurdities and fictions; and by these ye frame falsehoods, oppress the innocent, and withhold the light from them that believe. Ever trespassing under the mask of godliness, ye fill all things with defilement; ye pierce the pure and guileless conscience with deadly wounds, while ye withdraw, one may almost say, the very light of day from the eyes of men. But why should I particularize, when to speak of your criminality as it deserves demands more time and leisure than I can give? For so long and unmeasured is the catalogue of your offenses, so hateful and altogether atrocious are they, that a single day would not suffice to recount them all. And, indeed, it is well to turn one's ears and eyes from such a subject, lest by a description of each particular evil, the pure sincerity and freshness of one's own faith be impaired. Why then do I still bear with such abounding evil; especially since this protracted clemency is the cause that some who were sound are become tainted with this pestilent disease? Why not at once strike, as it were, at the root of so great a mischief by a public manifestation of displeasure?

Chapter LXV—*The Heretics are deprived of their Meeting Places.*

"Forasmuch, then, as it is no longer possible to bear with your pernicious errors, we give warning by this present statute that none of you henceforth presume to assemble yourselves together. We have directed, accordingly, that you be deprived of all the houses in which you are accustomed to hold your assemblies; and our care in this respect extends so far as to forbid the holding of your superstitious and senseless meetings, not in public merely, but in any private house or place whatsoever. Let those of you, therefore, who are desirous of embracing the true and pure religion, take the far better course of entering the catholic Church, and uniting with it in holy fellowship, whereby you will be enabled to arrive at the knowledge of the truth. In any case, the delusions of your perverted

understandings must entirely cease to mingle with and mar the felicity of our present times; I mean the impious and wretched double-mindedness of heretics and schismatics. For it is an object worthy of that prosperity which we enjoy through the favor of God, to endeavor to bring back those who in time past were living in the hope of future blessing, from all irregularity and error to the right path, from darkness to light, from vanity to truth, from death to salvation. And in order that this remedy may be applied with effectual power, we have commanded, as before said, that you be positively deprived of every gathering point for your superstitious meetings, I mean all the houses of prayer, if such be worthy of the name, which belong to heretics, and that these be made over without delay to the catholic Church; that any other places be confiscated to the public service, and no facility whatever be left for any future gathering; in order that from this day forward none of your unlawful assemblies may presume to appear in any public or private place. Let this edict be made public."

Chapter LXVI—*How on the Discovery of Prohibited Books among the Heretics; Many of them return to the Catholic Church.*

Thus were the lurking-places of the heretics broken up by the emperor's command, and the savage beasts they harbored (I mean the chief authors of their impious doctrines) driven to flight. Of those whom they had deceived, some, intimidated by the emperor's threats, disguising their real sentiments, crept secretly into the Church. For since the law directed that search should be made for their books, those of them who practiced evil and forbidden arts were detected, and these were ready to secure their own safety by dissimulation of every kind. Others, however, there were, who voluntarily and with real sincerity embraced a better hope. Meantime the prelates of the several churches continued to make strict inquiry, utterly rejecting those who attempted an entrance under the specious disguise of false pretenses, while those who came with sincerity of purpose were proved for a time, and after sufficient trial numbered with the congregation. Such was the treatment of those who stood charged with rank heresy; those, however, who maintained no impious doctrine, but had been separated from the one body through the influence of schismatic advisers, were received without difficulty or delay. Accordingly, numbers thus revisited, as it were, their own country after an absence in a

foreign land, and acknowledged the Church as a mother from whom they had wandered long, and to whom they now returned with joy and gladness. Thus the members of the entire body became united, and compacted in one harmonious whole; and the one catholic Church, at unity with itself, shone with full luster, while no heretical or schismatic body anywhere continued to exist. And the credit of having achieved this mighty work our Heaven-protected emperor alone, of all who had gone before him, was able to attribute to himself.

Book IV.

Chapter I—*How he honored Many by Presents and Promotions.*

While thus variously engaged in promoting the extension and glory of the church of God, and striving by every measure to commend the Saviour's doctrine, the emperor was far from neglecting secular affairs; but in this respect also he was unwearied in bestowing benefits of every kind and in quick succession on the people of every province. On the one hand he manifested a paternal anxiety for the general welfare of his subjects; on the other he would distinguish individuals of his own acquaintance with various marks of honor; conferring his benefits in every instance in a truly noble spirit. No one could request a favor from the emperor, and fail of obtaining what he sought; no one expected a boon from him, and found that expectation vain. Some received presents in money, others in land; some obtained the Prætorian præfecture, others senatorial, others again consular rank; many were appointed provincial governors; others were made counts of the first, second, or third order; in numberless instances the title of Most Illustrious and many other distinctions were conferred; for the emperor devised new dignities, that he might invest a larger number with the tokens of his favor.

Chapter II—*Remission of a Fourth Part of the Taxes.*

The extent to which he studied the general happiness and prosperity may be understood from a single instance most beneficial and universal in its application, and still gratefully remembered. He remitted a fourth part of the yearly tribute paid for land, and bestowed it on the owners of the soil; so that if we compute this yearly reduction, we shall find that the cultivators enjoyed their produce free of tribute every fourth year. This privilege being established by law, and secured for the time to come, has given occasion for the emperor's beneficence to be held, not merely by the then present generation, but by their children and descendants, in perpetual remembrance.

Chapter III—*Equalization of the More Oppressive Taxes.*

And whereas some persons found fault with the surveys of land which had been made under former emperors, and complained that their property was unduly burdened; acting in this case also on the principles of justice, he sent commissioners to equalize the tribute, and to secure immunity to those who had made this appeal.

Chapter IV—*His Liberality, from His Private Resources, to the Losers in Suits of a Pecuniary Nature.*

In cases of judicial arbitration, in order that the loser by his decision might not quit his presence less contented than the victorious litigant, he himself bestowed, and from his own private means, in some cases lands, in other money, on the defeated party. In this manner he took care that the loser, as having appeared in his presence, should be as well satisfied as the gainer of the cause; for he considered that no one ought in any case to retire dejected and sorrowful from an interview with such a prince. Thus it happened that both parties returned from the scene of trial with glad and cheerful countenances, while the emperor's noble-minded liberality excited universal admiration.

Chapter V—*Conquest of the Scythians defeated through the Sign of Our Saviour.*

And why should I relate even briefly and incidentally, how he subjected barbarous nations to the Roman power; how he was the first who subjugated the Scythian and Sarmatian tribes, which had never learned submission, and compelled them, how unwilling soever, to own the sovereignty of Rome? For the emperors who preceded him had actually rendered tribute to the Scythians; and Romans, by an annual payment, had confessed themselves servants to barbarians; an indignity which our emperor could no longer bear, nor think it consistent with his victorious career to continue the payment his predecessors had made. Accordingly, with full confidence in his Saviour's aid, he raised his conquering standard

against these enemies also, and soon reduced them all to obedience; coercing by military force those who fiercely resisted his authority, while, on the other hand, he conciliated the rest by wisely conducted embassies, and reclaimed them to a state of order and civilization from their lawless and savage life. Thus the Scythians at length learned to acknowledge subjection to the power of Rome.

Chapter VI—*Conquest of the Sarmatians, consequent on the Rebellion of their Slaves.*

With respect to the Sarmatians, God himself brought them beneath the rule of Constantine, and subdued a nation swelling with barbaric pride in the following manner. Being attacked by the Scythians, they had entrusted their slaves with arms, in order to repel the enemy. These slaves first overcame the invaders and then, turning their weapons against their masters, drove them all from their native land. The expelled Sarmatians found that their only hope of safety was in Constantine's protection; and he, whose familiar habit it was to save men's lives, received them all within the confines of the Roman empire[55]. Those who were capable of serving he incorporated with his own troops; to the rest he allotted lands to cultivate for their own support; so that they themselves acknowledged that their past misfortune had produced a happy result, in that they now enjoyed Roman liberty in place of savage barbarism. In this manner God added to his dominions many and various barbaric tribes.

Chapter VII—*Ambassadors from Different Barbarous Nations receive Presents from the Emperor.*

Indeed, ambassadors were continually arriving from all nations, bringing for his acceptance their most precious gifts. So that I myself have sometimes stood near the entrance of the imperial palace, and observed a noticeable array of barbarians in attendance, differing from each other in costume and decorations, and equally unlike in the fashion of their hair and beard. Their aspect truculent and terrible, their bodily stature

[55] To the number of 300,000, according to *Anonymus Valesianus*. This was in the year 334.

prodigious; some of a red complexion, others white as snow, others again of an intermediate color. For in the number of those I have referred to might be seen specimens of the Blemmyan tribes, of the Indians, and the Ethiopians, "that widely-divided race, remotest of mankind." All these in due succession, like some painted pageant, presented to the emperor those gifts which their own nation held in most esteem; some offering crowns of gold, others diadems set with precious stones; some bringing fair-haired boys, others barbaric vestments embroidered with gold and flowers; some appeared with horses, others with shields and long spears, with arrows and bows, thereby offering their services and alliance for the emperor's acceptance. These presents he separately received and carefully laid aside, acknowledging them in so munificent a manner as at once to enrich those who bore them. He also honored the noblest among them with Roman offices of dignity; so that many of them thenceforward preferred to continue their residence among us, and felt no desire to revisit their native land.

Chapter VIII—*That he wrote also to the King of Persia*[56]*, who had sent him an Embassy, on Behalf of the Christians in his Realm.*

The king of the Persians also having testified a desire to form an alliance with Constantine, by sending an embassy and presents as assurances of peace and friendship, the emperor, in negotiating this treaty, far surpassed the monarch who had first done him honor, in the magnificence with which he acknowledged his gifts. Having heard, too, that there were many churches of God in Persia, and that large numbers there were gathered into the fold of Christ, full of joy at this intelligence, he resolved to extend his anxiety for the general welfare to that country also, as one whose aim it was to care for all alike in every nation.

Chapter IX—*Letter of Constantine Augustus to Sapor, King of the Persians,*

[56] Sapor II. (310–381) called the Great, one of the Sassanidæ and afterwards the persistent enemy of the sons of Constantine. He was at various times a bitter persecutor of the Christians, and it is said (Plate) that "no Persian king had ever caused such terror to Rome as this monarch."

containing a truly Pious Confession of God and Christ.

Copy of his Letter to the King of Persia.

"By keeping the Divine faith, I am made a partaker of the light of truth; guided by the light of truth, I advance in the knowledge of the Divine faith. Hence it is that, as my actions themselves evince, I profess the most holy religion; and this worship I declare to be that which teaches me deeper acquaintance with the most holy God; aided by whose Divine power, beginning from the very borders of the ocean, I have aroused each nation of the world in succession to a well-grounded hope of security; so that those which, groaning in servitude to the most cruel tyrants and yielding to the pressure of their daily sufferings, had well nigh been utterly destroyed, have been restored through my agency to a far happier state. This God I confess that I hold in unceasing honor and remembrance; this God I delight to contemplate with pure and guileless thoughts in the height of his glory.

Chapter X—*The Writer denounces Idols, and glorifies God.*

"This God I invoke with bended knees, and recoil with horror from the blood of sacrifices, from their foul and detestable odors, and from every earth-born magic fire[57]; for the profane and impious superstitions which are defiled by these rites have cast down and consigned to perdition many, nay, whole nations of the Gentile world. For he who is Lord of all cannot endure that those blessings which, in his own loving-kindness and consideration of the wants of men, he has revealed for the use of all, should be perverted to serve the lusts of any. His only demand from man is purity of mind and an undefiled spirit; and by this standard he weighs the actions of virtue and godliness. For his pleasure is in works of moderation and gentleness; he loves the meek, and hates the turbulent spirit; delighting in faith, he chastises unbelief; by him all presumptuous power is broken down, and he avenges the insolence of the proud. While the arrogant and haughty are utterly overthrown, he requires the humble and forgiving with deserved rewards; even so does he highly honor and strengthen with his

[57] [Referring to the luminous appearances produced by the Pagan priests in the celebration of their mysteries—*Bag.*]

special help a kingdom justly governed, and maintains a prudent king in the tranquility of peace.

Chapter XI—*Against the Tyrants and Persecutors; and on the Captivity of Valerian.*

"I cannot, then, my brother believe that I err in acknowledging this one God, the author and parent of all things; whom many of my predecessors in power, led astray by the madness of error, have ventured to deny, but who were all visited with a retribution so terrible and so destructive, that all succeeding generations have held up their calamities as the most effectual warning to any who desire to follow in their steps. Of the number of these I believe him[58] to have been, whom the lightning-stroke of Divine vengeance drove forth from hence, and banished to your dominions and whose disgrace contributed to the fame of your celebrated triumph.

Chapter XII—*He declares that, having witnessed the Fall of the Persecutors, he now rejoices at the Peace enjoyed by the Christians.*

"And it is surely a happy circumstance that the punishment of such persons as I have described should have been publicly manifested in our own times. For I myself have witnessed the end of those who lately harassed the worshipers of God by their impious edict. And for this abundant thanksgivings are due to God that through his excellent Providence all men who observe his holy laws are gladdened by the renewed enjoyment of peace. Hence I am fully persuaded that everything is in the best and safest posture, since God is vouchsafing, through the influence of their pure and faithful religious service, and their unity of judgment respecting his Divine character, to gather all men to himself.

Chapter XIII—*He bespeaks his Affectionate Interest for the Christians in his Country.*

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[58] [Valerian, who had been a persecutor of the Christians, and whose expedition against the Persians had terminated in his own captivity, and subjection to every kind of insult and cruelty from the conquerors—*Bag.*]

"Imagine, then, with what joy I heard tidings so accordant with my desire, that the fairest districts of Persia are filled with those men on whose behalf alone I am at present speaking, I mean the Christians. I pray, therefore, that both you and they may enjoy abundant prosperity, and that your blessings and theirs may be in equal measure; for thus you will experience the mercy and favor of that God who is the Lord and Father of all. And now, because your power is great, I commend these persons to your protection; because your piety is eminent, I commit them to your care. Cherish them with your wonted humanity and kindness; for by this proof of faith you will secure an immeasurable benefit both to yourself and us."

Chapter XIV—*How the Zealous Prayers of Constantine procured Peace to the Christians.*

Thus, the nations of the world being everywhere guided in their course as it were by the skill of a single pilot, and acquiescing in the administration of him who governed as the servant of God, the peace of the Roman empire continued undisturbed, and all classes of his subjects enjoyed a life of tranquility and repose. At the same time the emperor, who was convinced that the prayers of godly men contributed powerfully to the maintenance of the public welfare, felt himself constrained zealously to seek such prayers and not only himself implored the help and favor of God, but charged the prelates of the churches to offer supplications on his behalf.

Chapter XV—*He causes himself to be represented on his Coins, and in his Portraits, in the Attitude of Prayer.*

How deeply his soul was impressed by the power of divine faith may be understood from the circumstance that he directed his likeness to be stamped on the golden coin of the empire with the eyes uplifted as in the posture of prayer to God; and this money became current throughout the Roman world. His portrait also at full length was placed over the entrance gates of the palaces in some cities, the eyes upraised to heaven, and the hands outspread as if in prayer.

Chapter XVI—*He forbids by Law the Placing his Likeness in Idol Temples.*

In this manner he represented himself, even through the medium of painting, as habitually engaged in prayer to God. At the same time he forbade, by an express enactment, the setting up of any resemblance of himself in any idol temple, that not even the mere lineaments of his person might receive contamination from the error of forbidden superstition.

Chapter XVII—*Of his Prayers in the Palace, and his Reading the Holy Scriptures.*

Still nobler proofs of his piety might be discerned by those who marked how he modeled as it were his very palace into a church of God, and himself afforded a pattern of zeal to those assembled therein; how he took the sacred scriptures into his hands, and devoted himself to the study of those divinely inspired oracles; after which he would offer up regular prayers with all the members of his imperial court.

Chapter XVIII—*He enjoins the General Observance of the Lord's Day, and the Day of Preparation.*

He ordained, too, that one day should be regarded as a special occasion for prayer; I mean that which is truly the first and chief of all, the day of our Lord and Saviour. The entire care of his household was entrusted to deacons and other ministers consecrated to the service of God, and distinguished by gravity of life and every other virtue; while his trusty body guard, strong in affection and fidelity to his person, found in their emperor an instructor in the practice of piety, and like him held the Lord's salutary day in honor and performed on that day the devotions which he loved. The same observance was recommended by this blessed prince to all classes of his subjects; his earnest desire being gradually to lead all mankind to the worship of God. Accordingly he enjoined on all the subjects of the Roman empire to observe the Lord's day, as a day of rest, and also to honor the day which precedes the Sabbath; in memory, I suppose, of what the Saviour of mankind is recorded to have achieved on that day[59].

[59] [That is, Friday. The passage is not very intelligible. Does it mean that Constantine

And since his desire was to teach his whole army zealously to honor the Saviour's day (which derives its name from light, and from the sun)[60], he freely granted to those among them who were partakers of the divine faith, leisure for attendance on the services of the Church of God, in order that they might be able, without impediment, to perform their religious worship.

Chapter XIX—*That he directed even his Pagan Soldiers to pray on the Lord's Day.*

With regard to those who were as yet ignorant of divine truth, he provided by a second statute that they should appear on each Lord's day on an open plain near the city, and there, at a given signal, offer to God with one accord a prayer which they had previously learnt. He admonished them that their confidence should not rest in their spears, or armor, or bodily strength, but that they should acknowledge the supreme God as the giver of every good, and of victory itself; to whom they were bound to offer their prayers with due regularity, uplifting their hands toward heaven, and raising their mental vision higher still to the king of heaven, on whom they should call as the Author of victory, their Preserver, Guardian, and Helper. The emperor himself prescribed the prayer to be used by all his troops, commanding them, to pronounce the following words in the Latin tongue;

Chapter XX—*The Form of Prayer given by Constantine to his Soldiers.*

"We acknowledge thee the only God; we own thee, as our King and implore thy succor. By thy favor have we gotten the victory; through thee are we mightier than our enemies. We render thanks for thy past benefits,

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ordered this day to be distinguished in some way from others, as the day of the Lord's crucifixion?—*Bag.*]

[60] [The decree of Constantine for the general observance of Sunday appears to have been issued A.D. 321, before which time both "the old and new sabbath" were observed by Christians. "Constantine (says Gibbon, ch. 20, note 8) styles the Lord's day *Dies solis,* a name which could not offend the ears of his Pagan subjects."—*Bag.*] This has been urged as ground for saying that Constantine did not commit himself to Christianity until the end of life, but it only shows his tact and care in treating the diverse elements of his empire.

and trust thee for future blessings. Together we pray to thee, and beseech thee long to preserve to us, safe and triumphant, our emperor Constantine and his pious sons." Such was the duty to be performed on Sunday by his troops, and such the prayer they were instructed to offer up to God.

Chapter XXI—*He orders the Sign of the Saviour's Cross to be engraven on his Soldiers' Shields.*

And not only so, but he also caused the sign of the salutary trophy to be impressed on the very shields of his soldiers; and commanded that his embattled forces should be preceded in their march, not by golden images, as heretofore, but only by the standard of the cross.

Chapter XXII—*Of his Zeal in Prayer, and the Honor he paid to the Feast of Easter.*

The emperor himself, as a sharer in the holy mysteries of our religion, would seclude himself daily at a stated hour in the innermost chambers of his palace; and there in solitary converse with his God, would kneel in humble supplication, and entreat the blessings of which he stood in need. But especially at the salutary feast of Easter, his religious diligence was redoubled; he fulfilled as it were the duties of a hierophant with every energy of his mind and body, and outvied all others in the zealous celebration of this feast. He changed, too, the holy night vigil into a brightness like that of day, by causing waxen tapers of great length to be lighted throughout the city; besides which, torches everywhere diffused their light, so as to impart to this mystic vigil a brilliant splendor beyond that of day. As soon as day itself returned, in imitation of our Saviour's gracious acts, he opened a liberal hand to his subjects of every nation, province, and people, and lavished abundant bounties on all.

Chapter XXIII—*How he forbade Idolatrous Worship, but honored Martyrs and the Church Festivals.*

Such were his sacred ministrations in the service of his God. At the same time, his subjects, both civil and military, throughout the empire, found a

barrier everywhere opposed against idol worship, and every kind of sacrifice forbidden. A statute was also passed, enjoining the due observance of the Lord's day, and transmitted to the governors of every province, who undertook, at the emperor's command, to respect the days commemorative of martyrs, and duly to honor the festal seasons in the churches; and all these intentions were fulfilled to the emperor's entire satisfaction.

Chapter XXIV—*That he described himself to be a Bishop, in Charge of Affairs External to the Church.*

Hence it was not without reason that once, on the occasion of his entertaining a company of bishops, he let fall the expression, "that he himself too was a bishop," addressing them in my hearing in the following words: "You are bishops whose jurisdiction is within the Church; I also am a bishop, ordained by God to overlook whatever is external to the Church." And truly his measures corresponded with his words; for he watched over his subjects with an episcopal care, and exhorted them as far as in him lay to follow a godly life.

Chapter XXV—*Prohibition of Sacrifices, of Mystic Rites, Combats of Gladiators, also the Licentious Worship of the Nile.*

Consistently with this zeal he issued successive laws and ordinances, forbidding any to offer sacrifice to idols, to consult diviners, to erect images, or to pollute the cities with the sanguinary combats of gladiators. And inasmuch as the Egyptians, especially those of Alexandria, had been accustomed to honor their river through a priesthood composed of effeminate men, a further law was passed commanding the extermination of the whole class as vicious, that no one might thenceforward be found tainted with the like impurity. And whereas the superstitious inhabitants apprehended that the river would in consequence withhold its customary flood, God himself showed his approval of the emperor's law by ordering all things in a manner quite contrary to their expectation. For those who had defiled the cities by their vicious conduct were indeed seen no more; but the river, as if the country through which it flowed had been purified to receive

it, rose higher than ever before, and completely overflowed the country with its fertilizing streams; thus effectually admonishing the deluded people to turn from impure men, and ascribe their prosperity to him alone who is the Giver of all good.

Chapter XXVI—*Amendment of the Law in Force respecting Childless Persons, and of the Law of Wills.*

So numerous, indeed, were the benefits of this kind conferred by the emperor on every province, as to afford ample materials to any who might desire to record them. Among these may be instanced those laws which he entirely remodeled, and established on a more equitable basis; the nature of which reform may be briefly and easily explained. The childless were punished under the old law with the forfeiture of their hereditary property, a merciless statute, which dealt with them as positive criminals. The emperor annulled this, and decreed that those so circumstanced should inherit. He regulated the question on the principles of equity and justice, arguing willful transgressors should be chastised with the penalties their crimes deserve. But nature herself denies children to many, who long, perhaps, for a numerous offspring, but are disappointed of their hope by bodily infirmity. Others continue childless, not from any dislike of posterity, but because their ardent love of philosophy renders them averse to the conjugal union. Women, too, consecrated to the service of God, have maintained a pure and spotless virginity, and have devoted themselves, soul and body to a life of entire chastity and holiness. What then? Should this conduct be deemed worthy of punishment, or rather of admiration and praise; since to desire this state is in itself honorable, and to maintain it surpasses the power of unassisted nature? Surely those whose bodily infirmity destroys their hope of offspring are worthy of pity, not of punishment; and he who devotes himself to a higher object calls not for chastisement, but especial admiration. On such principles of sound reason did the emperor rectify the defects of this law. Again, with regard to the wills of dying persons, the old laws had ordained that they should be expressed, even at the latest breath, as it were, in certain definite words, and had prescribed the exact form and terms to be employed. This practice had occasioned many fraudulent attempts to hinder the intentions

of the deceased from being carried into full effect. As soon as our emperor was aware of these abuses, he reformed this law likewise, declaring that a dying man ought to be permitted to indicate his last wishes in as few words as possible, and in whatever terms he pleased; and to set forth his will in any written form; or even by word of mouth, provided it were done in the presence of proper witnesses, who might be competent faithfully to discharge their trust.

Chapter XXVII—*Among Other Enactments, he decrees that no Christian shall slave to a Jew, and affirms the Validity of the Decisions of Councils.*

He also passed a law to the effect that no Christian should remain in servitude to a Jewish master, on the ground that it could not be right that those whom the Saviour had ransomed should be subjected to the yoke of slavery by a people who had slain the prophets and the Lord himself. If any were found hereafter in these circumstances, the slave was to be set at liberty, and the master punished by a fine.

He likewise added the sanction of his authority to the decisions of bishops passed at their synods, and forbade the provincial governors to annul any of their decrees; for he rated the priests of God at a higher value than any judge whatever. These and a thousand similar provisions did he enact for the benefit of his subjects; but there is not time now to give a special description of them, such as might convey an accurate idea of his imperial wisdom in these respects; nor need I now relate at length, how, as a devoted servant of the Supreme God, he employed himself from morning until night in seeking objects for his beneficence, and how equally and universally kind he was to all.

Chapter XXVIII—*His Gifts to the Churches, and Bounties to Virgins and to the Poor.*

His liberality, however, was most especially exercised on behalf of the churches of God. In some cases he granted lands, in others he issued supplies of food for the support of the poor, of orphan children, and widows; besides which, he evinced much care and forethought in fully providing the naked and destitute with clothing. He distinguished,

however, with most special honor those who had devoted their lives to the practice of Divine philosophy. Hence his respect, little short of veneration, for God's most holy and ever virgin choir; for he felt assured that the God to whom such persons devoted themselves was himself an inmate of their souls.

Chapter XXIX—*Of Constantine's Discourses and Declamations.*

For himself, he sometimes passed sleepless nights in furnishing his mind with Divine knowledge; and much of his time was spent in composing discourses, many of which he delivered in public; for he conceived it to be incumbent on him to govern his subjects by appealing to their reason, and to secure in all respects a rational obedience to his authority. Hence he would sometimes himself evoke an assembly, on which occasions vast multitudes attended, in the hope of hearing an emperor sustain the part of a philosopher. And if in the course of his speech any occasion offered of touching on sacred topics, he immediately stood erect, and with a grave aspect and subdued tone of voice seemed reverently to be initiating his auditors in the mysteries of the Divine doctrine; and when they greeted him with shouts of acclamation, he would direct them by his gestures to raise their eyes to heaven, and reserve their admiration for the Supreme King alone, and honor him with adoration and praise. He usually divided the subjects of his address, first thoroughly exposing the error of polytheism, and proving the superstition of the Gentiles to be mere fraud, and a cloak for impiety. He then would assert the sole sovereignty of God; passing thence to his Providence, both general and particular. Proceeding next to the dispensation of salvation, he would demonstrate its necessity, and adaptation to the nature of the case; entering next in order on the doctrine of the Divine judgment. And here especially he appealed most powerfully to the consciences of his hearers, while he denounced the rapacious and violent, and those who were slaves to an inordinate thirst of gain. Nay, he caused some of his own acquaintance who were present to feel the severe lash of his words, and to stand with downcast eyes in the consciousness of guilt, while he testified against them in the clearest and most impressive terms that they would have an account to render of their deeds to God. He reminded them that God himself had given him the

empire of the world, portions of which he himself, acting on the same Divine principle, had intrusted to their government; but that all would in due time be alike summoned to give account of their actions to the Supreme Sovereign of all. Such was his constant testimony; such his admonition and instruction. And he himself both felt and uttered these sentiments in the genuine confidence of faith; but his hearers were little disposed to learn, and deaf to sound advice; receiving his words indeed with loud applause, but induced by insatiable cupidity practically to disregard them.

Chapter XXX—*That he marked out before a Covetous Man the Measure of a Grave, and so put him to Shame.*

On one occasion he thus personally addressed one of his courtiers: "How far, my friend, are we to carry our inordinate desires?" Then drawing the dimensions of a human figure with a lance which he happened to have in his hand, he continued: "Though thou couldst obtain the whole wealth of this world, yea, the whole world itself, thou wilt carry with thee at last no more than this little spot which I have marked out, if indeed even that be thine." Such were the words and actions of this blessed prince; and though at the time he failed to reclaim any from their evil ways, yet notwithstanding the course of events afforded evident proof that his admonitions were more like Divine prophecies than mere words.

Chapter XXXI—*That he was derided because of his Excessive Clemency.*

Meantime, since there was no fear of capital punishment to deter from the commission of crime, for the emperor himself was uniformly inclined to clemency, and none of the provincial governors visited offenses with their proper penalties, this state of things drew with it no small degree of blame on the general administration of the empire; whether justly or not, let every one form his own judgment; for myself, I only ask permission to record the fact.

Chapter XXXII—*Of Constantine's Oration which he wrote to the*

Assembly of the Saints.

The emperor was in the habit of composing his orations in the Latin tongue, from which they were translated into Greek by interpreters appointed for this special service. One of the discourses thus translated I intend to annex, by way of specimen, to this present work, that one, I mean, which he inscribed "To the assembly of the saints," and dedicated to the Church of God, that no one may have ground for deeming my testimony on this head mere empty praise.

Chapter XXXIII—*How he listened standing to Eusebius' Declamation in Honor of our Saviour's Sepulchre.*

One act, however, I must by no means omit to record, which this admirable prince performed in my own presence. On one occasion, emboldened by the confident assurance I entertained of his piety, I had begged permission to pronounce a discourse on the subject of our Saviour's sepulchre in his hearing. With this request he most readily complied, and in the midst of a large number of auditors, in the interior of the palace itself, he stood and listened with the rest. I entreated him, but in vain, to seat himself on the imperial throne which stood near; he continued with fixed attention to weigh the topics of my discourse, and gave his own testimony to the truth of the theological doctrines it contained. After some time had passed, the oration being of considerable length, I was myself desirous of concluding; but this he would not permit, and exhorted me to proceed to the very end. On my again entreating him to sit, he in his turn was displeased and said that it was not right to listen in a careless manner to the discussion of doctrines relating to God; and again, that this posture was good and profitable to himself, since it was reverent to stand while listening to sacred truths. Having, therefore, concluded my discourse, I returned home, and resumed my usual occupations.

Chapter XXXIV—*That he wrote to Eusebius respecting Easter, and respecting Copies of the Holy Scriptures.*

Ever careful for the welfare of the churches of God, the emperor addressed me personally in a letter on the means of providing copies of the inspired

oracles, and also on the subject of the most holy feast of Easter. For I had myself dedicated to him an exposition of the mystical import of that feast; and the manner in which he honored me with a reply may be understood by any one who reads the following letter.

Chapter XXXV—*Constantine's Letter to Eusebius, in praise of his Discourse concerning Easter.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to Eusebius.

"It is indeed an arduous task, and beyond the power of language itself, worthily to treat of the mysteries of Christ, and to explain in a fitting manner the controversy respecting the feast of Easter, its origin as well as its precious and toilsome accomplishment. For it is not in the power even of those who are able to apprehend them, adequately to describe the things of God. I am, notwithstanding, filled with admiration of your learning and zeal, and have not only myself read your work with pleasure, but have given directions, according to your own desire, that it be communicated to many sincere followers of our holy religion. Seeing, then, with what pleasure we receive favors of this kind from your Sagacity, be pleased to gladden us more frequently with those compositions, to the practice of which, indeed, you confess yourself to have been trained from an early period, so that I am urging a willing man, as they say, in exhorting you to your customary pursuits. And certainly the high and confident judgment we entertain is a proof that the person who has translated your writings into the Latin tongue is in no respect incompetent to the task, impossible though it be that such version should fully equal the excellence of the works themselves. God preserve you, beloved brother." Such was his letter on this subject; and that which related to the providing of copies of the Scriptures for reading in the churches was to the following purport.

Chapter XXXVI—*Constantine's Letter to Eusebius on the Preparation of Copies of the Holy Scriptures.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to Eusebius.

"It happens, through the favoring providence of God our Saviour, that

great numbers have united themselves to the most holy church in the city which is called by my name. It seems, therefore, highly requisite, since that city is rapidly advancing in prosperity in all other respects, that the number of churches should also be increased. Do you, therefore, receive with all readiness my determination on this behalf. I have thought it expedient to instruct your Prudence to order fifty copies of the sacred Scriptures, the provision and use of which you know to be most needful for the instruction of the Church, to be written on prepared parchment in a legible manner, and in a convenient, portable form, by professional transcribers thoroughly practiced in their art. The catholicus of the diocese has also received instructions by letter from our Clemency to be careful to furnish all things necessary for the preparation of such copies; and it will be for you to take special care that they be completed with as little delay as possible. You have authority also, in virtue of this letter, to use two of the public carriages for their conveyance, by which arrangement the copies when fairly written will most easily be forwarded for my personal inspection; and one of the deacons of your church may be intrusted with this service, who, on his arrival here, shall experience my liberality. God preserve you, beloved brother!"

Chapter XXXVII—*How the Copies were provided.*

Such were the emperor's commands, which were followed by the immediate execution of the work itself, which we sent him in magnificent and elaborately bound volumes of a threefold and fourfold form. This fact is attested by another letter, which the emperor wrote in acknowledgment, in which, having heard that the city Constantia in our country, the inhabitants of which had been more than commonly devoted to superstition, had been impelled by a sense of religion to abandon their past idolatry, he testified his joy, and approval of their conduct.

Chapter XXXVIII—*How the Market-Town of Gaza was made a City for its Profession of Christianity, and received the Name of Constantia.*

For in fact the place now called Constantia, in the province of Palestine, having embraced the saving religion, was distinguished both by the favor of

God, and by special honor from the emperor, being now for the first time raised to the rank of a city, and receiving the more honored name of his pious sister in exchange for its former appellation.

Chapter XXXIX—*That a Place in Phœnicia also was made a City, and in Other Cities Idolatry was abolished, and Churches built.*

A similar change was effected in several other cities; for instance, in that town of Phœnicia which received its name from that of the emperor, and the inhabitants of which committed their innumerable idols to the flames, and adopted in their stead the principles of the saving faith. Numbers, too, in the other provinces, both in the cities and the country, became willing inquirers after the saving knowledge of God; destroyed as worthless things the images of every kind which they had heretofore held most sacred; voluntarily demolished the lofty temples and shrines which contained them; and, renouncing their former sentiments, or rather errors, commenced and completed entirely new churches. But since it is not so much my province to give a circumstantial detail of the actions of this pious prince, as it is theirs who have been privileged to enjoy his society at all times, I shall content myself with briefly recording such facts as have come to my own personal knowledge, before I proceed to notice the last days of his life.

Chapter XL—*That having conferred the Dignity of Cæsars on his Three Sons at the Three Decennial Periods of his Reign, he dedicated the Church at Jerusalem.*

By this time the thirtieth year of his reign was completed. In the course of this period, his three sons had been admitted at different times as his colleagues in the empire. The first, Constantinus, who bore his father's name, obtained this distinction about the tenth year of his reign. Constantius, the second son, so called from his grandfather, was proclaimed Cæsar about the twentieth, while Constans, the third, whose name expresses the firmness and stability of his character, was advanced to the same dignity at the thirtieth anniversary of his father's reign. Having thus reared a threefold offspring, a Trinity, as it were, of pious sons, and having

received them severally at each decennial period to a participation in his imperial authority, he judged the festival of his Tricennalia to be a fit occasion for thanksgiving to the Sovereign Lord of all, at the same time believing that the dedication of the church which his zealous magnificence had erected at Jerusalem might advantageously be performed.

Chapter XLI—*That in the meantime he ordered a Council to be convened at Tyre, because of Controversies raised in Egypt.*

Meanwhile that spirit of envy which is the enemy of all good, like a dark cloud intercepting the sun's brightest rays, endeavored to mar the joy of this festivity, by again raising contentions to disturb the tranquility of the Egyptian churches. Our divinely favored emperor, however, once more convened a synod composed of many bishops, and set them as it were in armed array, like the host of God, against this malignant spirit, having commanded their presence from the whole of Egypt and Libya, from Asia, and from Europe, in order, first, to decide the questions in dispute, and afterwards to perform the dedication of the sacred edifice above mentioned. He enjoined them, by the way, to adjust their differences at the capital city of Phœnicia, reminding them that they had no right, while harboring feelings of mutual animosity, to engage in the service of God, since his law expressly forbids those who are at variance to offer their gift until they have first become reconciled and mutually disposed to peace. Such were the salutary precepts which the emperor continually kept vividly before his own mind, and in accordance with which he admonished them to undertake their present duties in a spirit of perfect unanimity and concord, in a letter to the following purport.

Chapter XLII—*Constantine's Letter to the Council at Tyre.*

"Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to the holy Council at Tyre.

"Surely it would best consist with and best become the prosperity of these our times, that the Catholic Church should be undivided, and the servants of Christ be at this present moment clear from all reproach. Since, however, there are those who, carried away by a baleful and furious spirit of contention (for I will not charge them with intentionally leading a life

unworthy of their profession), are endeavoring to create that general confusion which, in my judgment, is the most pernicious of all evils; I exhort you, forward as you already are, to meet together and form a synod without delay; to defend those who need protection; to administer remedies to your brethren who are in peril; to recall the divided members to unity of judgment; to rectify errors while opportunity is yet allowed; that thus you may restore to so many provinces that due measure of concord which, strange and sad anomaly! the arrogance of a few individuals has destroyed. And I believed that all are alike persuaded that this course is at the same time pleasing to Almighty God (as well as the highest object of my own desires), and will bring no small honor to yourselves, should you be successful in restoring peace. Delay not, then, but hasten with redoubled zeal to terminate the present dissensions in a manner becoming the occasion, by assembling together in that spirit of true sincerity and faith which the Saviour whom we serve especially demands from us, I may almost say with an audible voice, on all occasions. No proof of pious zeal on my part shall be wanting. Already have I done all to which my attention was directed by your letters. I have sent to those bishops whose presence you desired, that they may share your counsels. I have despatched Dionysius, a man of consular rank, who will both remind those prelates of their duty who are bound to attend the Council with you, and will himself be there to superintend the proceedings, but especially to maintain good order. Meantime should any one, though I deem it most improbable, venture on this occasion to violate my command, and refuse his attendance, a messenger shall be despatched forthwith to banish that person in virtue of an imperial edict, and to teach him that it does not become him to resist an emperor's decrees when issued in defense of truth. For the rest, it will be for your Holinesses, unbiased either by enmity or favor, but consistently with ecclesiastical and apostolic order, to devise a fitting remedy whether it be for positive offenses or for unpremeditated errors; in order that you may at once free the Church from all reproach, relieve my anxiety, and, by restoring the blessings of peace to those who are now divided, procure the highest honor for yourselves. God preserve you, beloved brethren!"

Chapter XLIII—*Bishops from all the Provinces attended the Dedication of*

the Church at Jerusalem.

No sooner had these injunctions been carried into effect, than another emissary arrived with despatches from the emperor, and an urgent admonition to the Council to hasten their journey to Jerusalem without delay. Accordingly they all took their departure from the province of Phœnicia, and proceeded to their destination, availing themselves of the public means of transport. Thus Jerusalem became the gathering point for distinguished prelates from every province, and the whole city was thronged by a vast assemblage of the servants of God. The Macedonians had sent the bishop of their metropolis; the Pannonians and Mœsians the fairest of God's youthful flock among them. A holy prelate from Persia too was there, deeply versed in the sacred oracles; while Bithynian and Thracian bishops graced the Council with their presence; nor were the most illustrious from Cilicia wanting, nor the chief of the Cappadocians, distinguished above all for learning and eloquence. In short, the whole of Syria and Mesopotamia, Phœnicia and Arabia, Palestine, Egypt, and Libya, with the dwellers in the Thebaid, all contributed to swell the mighty concourse of God's ministers, followed as they were by vast numbers from every province. They were attended by an imperial escort, and officers of trust had also been sent from the palace itself, with instructions to heighten the splendor of the festival at the emperor's expense.

Chapter XLIV—*Of their Reception by the Notary Marianus; the Distribution of Money to the Poor; and Offerings to the Church.*

The director and chief of these officers was a most useful servant of the emperor, a man eminent for faith and piety, and thoroughly acquainted with the Divine word, who had been honorably conspicuous by his profession of godliness during the time of the tyrants' power, and therefore was deservedly entrusted with the arrangement of the present proceedings. Accordingly, in faithful obedience to the emperor's commands, he received the assembly with courteous hospitality, and entertained them with feasts and banquets on a scale of great splendor. He also distributed lavish supplies of money and clothing among the naked and destitute, and the multitudes of both sexes who suffered from want of food and the common necessaries of life. Finally, he enriched and beautified the church itself

throughout with offerings of imperial magnificence, and thus fully accomplished the service he had been commissioned to perform.

Chapter XLV—*Various Discourses by the Assembled Bishops; also by Eusebius, the Writer of this History.*

Meantime the festival derived additional luster both from the prayers and discourses of the ministers of God, some of whom extolled the pious emperor's willing devotion to the Saviour of mankind, and dilated on the magnificence of the edifice which he had raised to his memory. Others afforded, as it were, an intellectual feast to the ears of all present, by public disquisitions on the sacred doctrines of our religion. Others interpreted passages of holy Scripture, and unfolded their hidden meaning; while such as were unequal to these efforts presented a bloodless sacrifice and mystical service to God in the prayers which they offered for general peace, for the Church of God, for the emperor himself as the instrumental cause of so many blessings, and for his pious sons. I myself too, unworthy as I was of such a privilege, pronounced various public orations in honor of this solemnity, wherein I partly explained by a written description the details of the imperial edifice, and partly endeavored to gather from the prophetic visions apt illustrations of the symbols it displayed. Thus joyfully was the festival of dedication celebrated in the thirtieth year of our emperor's reign.

Chapter XLVI—*That Eusebius afterwards delivered his Description of the Church of the Saviour, and a Tricennial Oration before Constantine himself.*

The structure of the church of our Saviour, the form of his sacred cave, the splendor of the work itself, and the numberless offerings in gold, and silver, and precious stones, I have described to the best of my ability, and dedicated to the emperor in a separate treatise, which on a fitting opportunity I shall append to this present work. I shall add to it also that oration on his Tricennalia which shortly afterwards, having traveled to the city which bears his name, I delivered in the emperor's own presence[61]. This was the second opportunity afforded me of glorifying the

[61] The Oration is appended to this work.

Supreme God in the imperial palace itself; and on this occasion my pious hearer evinced the greatest joy, as he afterwards testified, when he entertained the bishops then present, and loaded them with distinctions of every kind.

Chapter XLVII—*That the Council at Nicæa was held in the Twentieth, the Dedication of the Church at Jerusalem in the Thirtieth, Year of Constantine's Reign.*

This second synod the emperor convened at Jerusalem, being the greatest of which we have any knowledge, next to the first which he had summoned at the famous Bithynian city. That indeed was a triumphal assembly, held in the twentieth year of his reign, an occasion of thanksgiving for victory over his enemies in the very city which bears the name of victory. The present meeting added luster to the thirtieth anniversary, during which the emperor dedicated the church at the sepulchre of our Saviour, as a peace-offering to God, the giver of all good.

Chapter XLVIII—*That Constantine was displeased with one who praised him excessively.*

And now that all these ceremonies were completed, and the divine qualities of the emperor's character continued to be the theme of universal praise, one of God's ministers presumed so far as in his own presence to pronounce him blessed, as having been counted worthy to hold absolute and universal empire in this life, and as being destined to share the empire of the Son of God in the world to come. These words, however, Constantine heard with indignation, and forbade the speaker to hold such language, exhorting him rather to pray earnestly on his behalf, that whether in this life or in that which is to come, he might be found worthy to be a servant of God.

Chapter XLIX—*Marriage of his Son Constantius Cæsar.*

On the completion of the thirtieth year of his reign he solemnized the

marriage of his second son[62], having concluded that of his first-born long before. This was an occasion of great joy and festivity, the emperor himself attending on his son at the ceremony, and entertaining the guests of both sexes, the men and women in distinct and separate companies, with sumptuous hospitality. Rich presents likewise were liberally distributed among the cities and people.

Chapter L—*Embassy and Presents from the Indians.*

About this time ambassadors from the Indians, who inhabit the distant regions of the East, arrived with presents consisting of many varieties of brilliant precious stones, and animals differing in species from those known to us. These offerings they presented to the emperor, thus allowing that his sovereignty extended even to the Indian Ocean, and that the princes of their country, who rendered homage to him both by paintings and statues, acknowledged his imperial and paramount authority. Thus the Eastern Indians now submitted to his sway, as the Britons of the Western Ocean had done at the commencement of his reign.

Chapter LI—*That Constantine divided the Empire between his Three Sons, whom he had instructed in Politics and Religion.*

Having thus established his power in the opposite extremities of the world, he divided the whole extent of his dominions, as though he were allotting a patrimonial inheritance to the dearest objects of his regard, among his three sons. To the eldest he assigned his grand-father's portion; to the second, the empire of the East; to the third, the countries which lie between these two divisions[63]. And being desirous of furnishing his children with an inheritance truly valuable and salutary to their souls, he

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[62] His second son by Fausta. Crispus seems now to be counted out. This was not the famous Eusebia who was his second wife.

[63] ["The younger Constantine was appointed to hold his court in Gaul; and his brother Constantius ex- changed that department, the ancient patrimony of their father, for the more opulent, but less martial, countries of the East. Italy, the Western Illyricum, and Africa, were accustomed to revere Constans, the third of his sons, as the representative of the great Constantine" (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall,* ch. 18)—*Bag.*]

had been careful to imbue them with true religious principles, being himself their guide to the knowledge of sacred things, and also appointing men of approved piety to be their instructors. At the same time he assigned them the most accomplished teachers of secular learning, by some of whom they were taught the arts of war, while they were trained by others in political, and by others again in legal science. To each moreover was granted a truly royal retinue, consisting of infantry, spearmen, and body guards, with every other kind of military force; commanded respectively by captains, tribunes, and generals of whose warlike skill and devotion to his sons the emperor had had previous experience.

Chapter LII—*That after they had reached Man's Estate he was their Guide in Piety.*

As long as the Cæsars were of tender years, they were aided by suitable advisers in the management of public affairs; but on their arrival at the age of manhood their father's instructions alone sufficed. When present he proposed to them his own example, and admonished them to follow his pious course; in their absence he furnished them by letter with rules of conduct suited to their imperial station, the first and greatest of which was an exhortation to value the knowledge and worship of the Sovereign Lord of all more than wealth, nay, more than empire itself. At length he permitted them to direct the public administration of the empire without control, making it his first request that they would care for the interests of the Church of God, and boldly profess themselves disciples of Christ. Thus trained, and excited to obedience not so much by precept as by their own voluntary desire for virtue, his sons more than fulfilled the admonitions of their father, devoting their earnest attention to the service of God, and observing the ordinances of the Church even in the palace itself, with all the members of their households[64]. For their father's forethought had provided that all the attendants of his sons should be Christians. And not only so, but the military officers of highest rank, and those who had the control of public business, were professors of the same faith; for the emperor placed confidence in the fidelity of men devoted to the service of

[64] The expression is over strong. Constantius, e.g., was not baptized until just before his death.

God, as in a strong and sure defense. When our thrice blessed prince had completed these arrangements, and thus secured order and tranquility throughout the empire, God, the dispenser of all blessings, judged it to be the fitting time to translate him to a better inheritance, and summoned him to pay the debt of nature.

Chapter LIII—*Having reigned about Thirty-Two Years, and lived above Sixty, he still had a Sound Body.*

He completed the time of his reign in two and thirty years, wanting a few months and days[65], and his whole life extended to about twice that period. At this age he still possessed a sound and vigorous body, free from all blemish, and of more than youthful vivacity; a noble mien, and strength equal to any exertion; so that he was able to join in martial exercises, to ride, endure the fatigues of travel, engage in battle, and erect trophies over his conquered enemies, besides gaining those bloodless victories by which he was wont to triumph over those who opposed him.

Chapter LIV—*Of those who abused His Extreme Benevolence for Avarice and Hypocrisy.*

In like manner his mental qualities reached the highest point of human perfection. Indeed he was distinguished by every excellence of character, but especially by benevolence; a virtue, however, which subjected him to censure from many, in consequence of the baseness of wicked men, who ascribed their own crimes to the emperor's forbearance. In truth I can myself bear testimony to the grievous evils which prevailed during these times; I mean the violence of rapacious and unprincipled men, who preyed on all classes of society alike, and the scandalous hypocrisy of those who crept into the Church, and assumed the name and character of Christians. His own benevolence and goodness of heart, the genuineness of his own faith, and his truthfulness of character, induced the emperor to credit the profession of these reputed Christians, who craftily preserved the semblance of sincere affection for his person. The confidence he reposed in such men

[65] [In his *Chronicon,* Eusebius gives the more correct period of thirty years and ten months. Constantine's reign began A.D. 306, and his death took place A.D. 337—*Bag.*]

sometimes forced him into conduct unworthy of himself, of which envy took advantage to cloud in this respect the luster of his character.

Chapter LV—*Constantine employed himself in Composition of Various Kinds to the Close of his Life.*

These offenders, however, were soon over-taken by divine chastisement. To return to our emperor. He had so thoroughly trained his mind in the art of reasoning that he continued to the last to compose discourses on various subjects, to deliver frequent orations in public, and to instruct his hearers in the sacred doctrines of religion. He was also habitually engaged in legislating both on political and military questions; in short, in devising whatever might be conducive to the general welfare of the human race. It is well worthy of remark, that, very shortly before his departure, he pronounced a funeral oration before his usual auditory, in which he spoke at length on the immortality of the soul, the state of those who had persevered in a life of godliness, and the blessings which God has laid up in store for them that love him. On the other hand he made it appear by copious and conclusive arguments what the end of those will be who have pursued a contrary career, describing in vivid language the final ruin of the ungodly. His powerful testimony on these subjects seemed so far to touch the consciences of those around him, that one of the self-imagined philosophers, of whom he asked his opinion of what he had heard, bore testimony to the truth of his words, and accorded a real, though reluctant, tribute of praise to the arguments by which he had exposed the worship of a plurality of gods. By converse such as this with his friends before his death, the emperor seemed as it were to smooth and prepare the way for his transition to a happier life.

Chapter LVI—*How he took Bishops with him on an Expedition against the Persians, and took with him a Tent in the Form of a Church.*

It is also worthy of record that about the time of which I am at present writing, the emperor, having heard of an insurrection of some barbarians in the East, observed that the conquest of this enemy was still in store for him, and resolved on an expedition against the Persians. Accordingly he

proceeded at once to put his forces in motion, at the same time communicating his intended march to the bishops who happened to be at his court, some of whom he judged it right to take with him as companions, and as needful coadjutors in the service of God. They, on the other hand, cheerfully declared their willingness to follow in his train, disclaiming any desire to leave him, and engaging to battle with and for him by supplication to God on his behalf. Full of joy at this answer to his request, he unfolded to them his projected line of march; after which he caused a tent of great splendor, representing in shape the figure of a church, to be prepared for his own use in the approaching war. In this he intended to unite with the bishops in offering prayers to the God from whom all victory proceeds.

Chapter LVII—*How he received an Embassy from the Persians and kept the Night Vigil with others at the Feast of Easter.*

In the meanwhile the Persians, hearing of the emperor's warlike preparations, and not a little terrified at the prospect of an engagement with his forces, dispatched an embassy to pray for conditions of peace. These overtures the emperor, himself a sincere lover of peace, at once accepted, and readily entered on friendly relations with that people. At this time, the great festival of Easter was at hand; on which occasion he rendered the tribute of his prayers to God, and passed the night in watching with the rest.

Chapter LVIII—*Concerning the Building of a Church in Honor of the Apostles at Constantinople.*

After this he proceeded to erect a church in memory of the apostles, in the city which bears his name. This building he carried to a vast height, and brilliantly decorated by encasing it from the foundation to the roof with marble slabs of various colors. He also formed the inner roof of finely fretted work, and overlaid it throughout with gold. The external covering, which protected the building from the rain, was of brass instead of tiles; and this too was splendidly and profusely adorned with gold, and reflected the sun's rays with a brilliancy which dazzled the distant beholder. The

dome was entirely encompassed by a finely carved tracery, wrought in brass and gold.

Chapter LIX—*Farther Description of the same Church.*

Such was the magnificence with which the emperor was pleased to beautify this church. The building was surrounded by an open area of great extent, the four sides of which were terminated by porticos which enclosed the area and the church itself. Adjoining these porticos were ranges of stately chambers, with baths and promenades, and besides many apartments adapted to the use of those who had charge of the place.

Chapter LX—*He also erected his own Sepulchral Monument in this Church.*

All these edifices the emperor consecrated with the desire of perpetuating the memory of the apostles of our Saviour. He had, however, another object in erecting this building; an object at first unknown, but which afterwards became evident to all. He had in fact made choice of this spot in the prospect of his own death, anticipating with extraordinary fervor of faith that his body would share their title with the apostles themselves, and that he should thus even after death become the subject, with them, of the devotions which should be performed to their honor in this place. He accordingly caused twelve coffins to be set up in this church, like sacred pillars in honor and memory of the apostolic number, in the center of which his own was placed, having six of theirs on either side of it. Thus, as I said, he had provided with prudent foresight an honorable resting-place for his body after death, and, having long before secretly formed this resolution, he now consecrated this church to the apostles, believing that this tribute to their memory would be of no small advantage to his own soul. Nor did God disappoint him of that which he so ardently expected and desired. For after he had completed the first services of the feast of Easter, and had passed this sacred day of our Lord in a manner which made it an occasion of joy and gladness to himself and to all; the God through whose aid he performed all these acts, and whose zealous servant he continued to be even to the end of life, was pleased at a happy

time to translate him to a better life.

Chapter LXI—*His Sickness at Helenopolis, and Prayers respecting his Baptism.*

At first he experienced some slight bodily indisposition, which was soon followed by positive disease. In consequence of this he visited the hot baths of his own city; and thence proceeded to that which bore the name of his mother. Here he passed some time in the church of the martyrs, and offered up supplications and prayers to God. Being at length convinced that his life was drawing to a close, he felt the time was come at which he should seek purification from sins of his past career, firmly believing that whatever errors he had committed as a mortal man, his soul would be purified from them through the efficacy of the mystical words and the salutary waters of baptism. Impressed with these thoughts, he poured forth his supplications and confessions to God, kneeling on the pavement in the church itself, in which he also now for the first time received the imposition of hands with prayer[66]. After this he proceeded as far as the suburbs of Nicomedia, and there, having summoned the bishops to meet him, addressed them in the following words.

Chapter LXII—*Constantine's Appeal to the Bishops, requesting them to*

[66] [These words seem to prove that the emperor now first became a catechumen. His postponement of baptism until his last illness (after having stood forward so long as the public advocate and protector of the Christian religion), and the superstitious reliance which he was encouraged to place on the late performance of this "mysterious" rite, afford an evidence of the melancholy obscuration of Christian truth at the very time when Christianity was ostensibly becoming the religion of the Roman Empire. There is probably too much truth in the following remarks of Gibbon: "The pride of Constantine, who refused the privileges of a catechumen, cannot easily be explained or excused: but the delay of his baptism maybe justified by the maxims and practice of ecclesiastical antiquity. The sacrament of baptism was supposed to contain a full and absolute expiation of sin; and the soul was instantly restored to its original purity, and entitled to the promise of eternal salvation. Among the proselytes of Christianity, there were many who judged it imprudent to precipitate a salutary rite, which could not be repeated; to throw away an inestimable privilege, which could never be recovered," &c. (*Decline and Fall,* ch. 20)—*Bag.*]

confer upon him the Rite of Baptism.

"The time is arrived which I have long hoped for, with an earnest desire and prayer that I might obtain the salvation of God. The hour is come in which I too may have the blessing of that seal which confers immortality; the hour in which I may receive the seal of salvation. I had thought to do this in the waters of the river Jordan, wherein our Saviour, for our example, is recorded to have been baptized; but God, who knows what is expedient for us, is pleased that I should receive this blessing here. Be it so, then, without delay; for should it be his will who is Lord of life and death, that my existence here should be prolonged, and should I be destined henceforth to associate with the people of God, and unite with them in prayer as a member of his Church, I will prescribe to myself from this time such a course of life as befits his service." After he had thus spoken, the prelates performed the sacred ceremonies in the usual manner, and, having given him the necessary instructions, made him a partaker of the mystic ordinance. Thus was Constantine the first of all sovereigns who was regenerated and perfected in a church dedicated to the martyrs of Christ; thus gifted with the Divine seal of baptism, he rejoiced in spirit, was renewed, and filled with heavenly light; his soul was gladdened by reason of the fervency of his faith, and astonished at the manifestation of the power of God. At the conclusion of the ceremony he arrayed himself in shining imperial vestments, brilliant as the light[67], and reclined on a couch of the purest white, refusing to clothe himself with the purple any more.

Chapter LXIII—*How after his Baptism he rendered Thanks to God.*

He then lifted his voice and poured forth a strain of thanksgiving to God; after which he added these words. "Now I know that I am truly blessed; now I feel assured that I am accounted worthy of immortality, and am made a partaker of Divine light." He further expressed his compassion for the unhappy condition of those who were strangers to such blessings as he enjoyed; and when the tribunes and generals of his army appeared in his presence with lamentations and tears at the prospect of their

[67] [It was customary for neophytes to wear white garments, which they laid aside on the eighth day from their baptism—*Bag.*]

bereavement, and with prayers that his days might yet be prolonged, he assured them in reply that he was now in possession of true life; that none but himself could know the value of the blessings he had received; so that he was anxious rather to hasten than to defer his departure to God. He then proceeded to complete the needful arrangement of his affairs, bequeathing an annual donation to the Roman inhabitants of his imperial city; apportioning the inheritance of the empire, like a patrimonial estate, among his own children; in short, making every disposition according to his own pleasure.

Chapter LXIV—*Constantine's Death at Noon on the Feast of Pentecost.*

All these events occurred during a most important festival, I mean the august and holy solemnity of Pentecost, which is distinguished by a period of seven weeks, and sealed with that one day on which the holy Scriptures attest, the ascension of our common Saviour into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Spirit among men. In the course of this feast the emperor received the privileges I have described; and on the last day of all, which one might justly call the feast of feasts, he was removed about mid-day to the presence of his God, leaving his mortal remains to his fellow mortals, and carrying into fellowship with God that part of his being which was capable of understanding and loving him. Such was the close of Constantine's mortal life. Let us now attend to the circumstances which followed this event.

Chapter LXV—*Lamentations of the Soldiery and their Officers.*

Immediately the assembled spearmen and body-guard rent their garments, and prostrated themselves on the ground, striking their heads, and uttering lamentations and cries of sorrow, calling on their imperial lord and master, or rather, like true children, on their father, while their tribunes and centurions addressed him as their preserver, protector, and benefactor. The rest of the soldiery also came in respectful order to mourn as a flock the removal of their good shepherd. The people meanwhile ran wildly throughout the city, some expressing the inward sorrow of their hearts by loud cries, others appearing confounded with grief; each mourning the

event as a calamity which had befallen himself, and bewailing his death as though they felt themselves bereft of a blessing common alike to all.

Chapter LXVI—*Removal of the Body from Nicomedia to the Palace at Constantinople.*

After this the soldiers lifted the body from its couch, and laid it in a golden coffin, which they enveloped in a covering of purple, and removed to the city which was called by his own name. Here it was placed in an elevated position in the principal chamber of the imperial palace, and surrounded by candles burning in candlesticks of gold, presenting a marvelous spectacle, and such as no one under the light of the sun had ever seen on earth since the world itself began. For in the central apartment of the imperial palace, the body of the Emperor lay in its elevated resting-place, arrayed in the symbols of sovereignty, the diadem and purple robe, and encircled by a numerous retinue of attendants, who watched around it incessantly night and day.

Chapter LXVII—*He received the same Honors from the Counts and other Officers as before his Death.*

The military officers, too, of the highest rank, the counts, and the whole order of magistrates, who had been accustomed to do obeisance to their emperor before, continued to fulfill this duty without any change, even after his death entering the chamber at the appointed times, and saluting their coffined sovereign with bended knee, as though he were still alive. After them the senators appeared, and all who had been distinguished by any honorable office, and rendered the same homage. These were followed by multitudes of every rank, who came with their wives and children to witness the spectacle. These honors continued to be rendered for a considerable time, the soldiers having resolved thus to guard the body until his sons should arrive, and take on themselves the conduct of their father's funeral. No mortal had ever, like this blessed prince, continued to reign even after death, and to receive the same homage as during his life; he only, of all who have ever lived, obtained this reward from God; a suitable reward, since he alone of all sovereigns had in all his actions honored the

Supreme God and his Christ, and God himself accordingly was pleased that even his mortal remains should still retain imperial authority among men; thus indicating to all who were not utterly devoid of understanding the immortal and endless empire which his soul was destined to enjoy. This was the course of events here.

Chapter LXVIII—*Resolution of the Army to confer thence-forward the Title of Augustus on his Sons.*

Meanwhile the tribunes selected from the troops under their command those officers whose fidelity and zeal had long been known to the emperor, and dispatched them to the Cæsars with intelligence of the late event. This service they accordingly performed. As soon, however, as the soldiery throughout the provinces received the tidings of the emperor's decease, they all, as if by a supernatural impulse, resolved with one consent, as though their great emperor had been yet alive, to acknowledge none other than his sons as sovereigns of the Roman world; and these they soon after determined should no longer retain the name of Cæsar, but should each be honored with the title of Augustus, a name which indicates the highest supremacy of imperial power. Such were the measures adopted by the army; and these resolutions they communicated to each other by letter, so that the unanimous desire of the legions became known at the same point of time throughout the whole extent of the empire.

Chapter LXIX—*Mourning for Constantine at Rome; and the Honor paid him there through Paintings after his Death.*

On the arrival of the news of the emperor's death in the imperial city, the Roman senate and people felt the announcement as the heaviest and most afflictive of all calamities, and gave themselves up to an excess of grief. The baths and markets were closed, the public spectacles, and all other recreations in which men of leisure are accustomed to indulge, were interrupted. Those who had erewhile lived in luxurious ease, now walked the streets in gloomy sadness, while all united in blessing the name of the deceased, as the one who was dear to God, and truly worthy of the imperial dignity. Nor was their sorrow expressed only in words; they proceeded also

to honor him, by the dedication of paintings to his memory, with the same respect as before his death. The design of these pictures embodied a representation of heaven itself, and depicted the emperor reposing in an ethereal mansion above the celestial vault. They too declared his sons alone to be emperors and Augusti, and begged with earnest entreaty that they might be permitted to receive the body of their emperor, and perform his obsequies in the imperial city.

Chapter LXX—*His Burial by his Son Constantius at Constantinople.*

Thus did they there testify their respect for the memory of him who had been honored by God. The second of his sons, however, who had by this time arrived, proceeded to celebrate his father's funeral in the city which bears his name, himself heading the procession, which was preceded by detachments of soldiers in military array, and followed by vast multitudes, the body itself being surrounded by companies of spearmen and heavy armed infantry. On the arrival of the procession at the church dedicated to the apostles of our Saviour, the coffin was there entombed. Such honor did the youthful emperor Constantius render to his deceased parent, both by his presence, and by the due performance of this sacred ceremony.

Chapter LXXI—*Sacred Service in the Church of the Apostles on the Occasion of Constantine's Funeral.*

As soon as [Constantius] had withdrawn himself with the military train, the ministers of God came forward, with the multitude and the whole congregation of the faithful, and performed the rites of Divine worship with prayer. At the same time the tribute of their praises was given to the character of this blessed prince, whose body rested on a lofty and conspicuous monument, and the whole multitude united with the priests of God in offering prayers for his soul, not without tears—nay, rather with much weeping; thus performing an office consonant with the desires of the pious deceased[68]. In this respect also the favor of God was manifested to his servant, in that he not only bequeathed the succession of

[68] [Alluding to his desire of being buried in the church of the Apostles, and sharing their honors, as noticed in ch. 60—*Bag.*]

the empire to his own beloved sons, but that the earthly tabernacle of his thrice blessed soul, according to his own earnest wish, was permitted to share the monument of the apostles; was associated with the honor of their name, and with that of the people of God; was honored by the performance of the sacred ordinances and mystic service; and enjoyed a participation in the prayers of the saints. Thus, too, he continued to possess imperial power even after death, controlling, as though with renovated life, a universal dominion, and retaining in his own name, as Victor, Maximus, Augustus, the sovereignty of the Roman world[69].

Chapter LXXII—*Of the Phœnix.*

We cannot compare him with that bird of Egypt, the only one, as they say, of its kind, which dies, self-sacrificed, in the midst of aromatic perfumes, and, rising from its own ashes with new life, soars aloft in the same form which it had before. Rather did he resemble his Saviour, who, as the sown corn which is multiplied from a single grain, had yielded abundant increase through the blessing of God, and had overspread the whole world with his fruit. Even so did our thrice blessed prince become multiplied, as it were, through the succession of his sons. His statue was erected along with theirs in every province; and the name of Constantine was owned and honored even after the close of his mortal life.

Chapter LXXIII—*How Constantine is represented on Coins in the Act of ascending to Heaven.*

A coinage was also struck which bore the following device. On one side appeared the figure of our blessed prince, with the head closely veiled; the reverse exhibited him sitting as a charioteer, drawn by four horses, with a hand stretched downward from above to receive him up to heaven.

Chapter LXXIV—*The God whom he had honored deservedly honored him*

[69] [It appears that an interregnum of about three months took place, during which all the laws and edicts continued to be issued in the name of Constantine, as before his death—*Bag.*]

in Return.

Such are the proofs by which the Supreme God has made it manifest to us, in the person of Constantine, who alone of all sovereigns had openly professed the Christian faith, how great a difference he perceives between those whose privilege it is to worship him and his Christ, and those who have chosen the contrary part, who provoked his enmity by daring to assail his Church, and whose calamitous end, in every instance, afforded tokens of his displeasure, as manifestly as the death of Constantine conveyed to all men an evident assurance of his Divine love.

Chapter LXXV—*He surpassed all Preceding Emperors in Devotion to God.*

Standing, as he did, alone and pre-eminent among the Roman emperors as a worshiper of God; alone as the bold proclaimer to all men of the doctrine of Christ; having alone rendered honor, as none before him had ever done, to his Church; having alone abolished utterly the error of polytheism, and discountenanced idolatry in every form; so, alone among them both during life and after death, was he accounted worthy of such honors as none can say have been attained to by any other; so that no one, whether Greek or Barbarian, nay, of the ancient Romans themselves, has ever been presented to us as worthy of comparison with him.

The Oration of the Emperor Constantine

which he addressed "to the assembly of the saints."

Chapter I—*Preliminary Remarks on the Feast of Easter; and how the Word of God, having conferred Manifold Benefits on Mankind, was betrayed by his Beneficiaries.*

That light which far outshines the day and sun, first pledge of resurrection, and renovation of bodies long since dissolved, the divine token of promise, the path which leads to everlasting life—in a word, the day of the Passion—is arrived, best beloved doctors, and ye, my friends who are assembled here, ye blessed multitudes, who worship him who is the author of all worship, and praise him continually with heart and voice, according to the precepts of his holy word. But thou, Nature, parent of all things, what blessing like to this hast thou ever accomplished for mankind? Nay rather, what is in any sense thy workmanship, since he who formed the universe is himself the author of thy being? For it is he who has arrayed thee in thy beauty; and the beauty of Nature is life according to Nature's laws. But principles quite opposed to Nature have mightily prevailed; in that men have agreed in withholding his rightful worship from the Lord of all, believing that the order of the universe depended, not on his providence, but, on the blind uncertainty of chance; and this notwithstanding the clearest announcement of the truth by his inspired prophets, whose words should have claimed belief, but were in every way resisted by that impious wickedness which hates the light of truth, and loves the obscure mazes of darkness. Nor was this error unaccompanied by violence and cruelty, especially in that the will of princes encouraged the blind impetuosity of the multitude, or rather itself led the way in the career of reckless folly. Such principles as these, confirmed by the practice of many generations, became the source of terrible evils in those early times; but no sooner had the radiance of the Saviour's presence appeared, than justice took the place of wrong, a calm succeeded the confusion of the storm, and the predictions of the prophets were all fulfilled. For after he had enlightened the world by the glorious discretion and purity of his character, and had ascended to the

mansions of his father's house, he founded his Church on earth, as a holy temple of virtue, an immortal, imperishable temple, wherein the worship due to the Supreme Father and to himself should be piously performed. But what did the insane malice of the nations hereupon devise? Their effort was to reject the grace of Christ, and to ruin that Church which was ordained for the salvation of all, though they thus ensured the overthrow of their own superstition. Once more then unholy sedition, once more war and strife prevailed, with stiff-neckedness, luxurious riot, and that craving for wealth which now soothes its victims with specious hope, now strikes them with groundless fear; a craving which is contrary to nature, and the very characteristic of Vice herself. Let her, however, lie prostrate in the dust, and own the victorious power of Virtue; and let her rend and tear herself, as well she may, in the bitterness of repentance. But let us now proceed to speak of topics which pertain to the Divine doctrine.

Chapter II—*An Appeal to the Church and to his Hearers to pardon and correct the Errors of His Speech.*

Hear then, thou master of the ship, possessor of virgin purity, and thou Church, the cherisher of tender and inexperienced age, guardian of truth and gentleness, through whose perennial fountain the stream of salvation flows! Be ye also indulgent, my hearers, who worship God sincerely, and are, therefore, the objects of his care; attending, not to the language, but to the truth of what is said; not to him who speaks, but rather to the pious zeal which hallows his discourse! For what will be the use of words when the real purpose of the speaker remains unknown? It may be, indeed, that I essay great things; the love of God which animates my soul, a love which overpowers natural reserve, is my plea for the bold attempt. On you, then, I call, who are best instructed in the mysteries of God, to aid me with your counsel, to follow me with your thoughts, and correct whatever shall savor of error in my words, expecting no display of perfect knowledge, but graciously accepting the sincerity of my endeavor. And may the Spirit of the Father and the Son accord his mighty aid, while I utter the words which he shall suggest to speech or thought. For if any one, whether in the practice of eloquence, or any other art, expects to produce a finished work without the help of God, both the author and his

efforts will be found alike imperfect; while he has no cause to fear, no room for discouragement, who has once been blessed with the inspiration of Heaven. Wherefore asking your indulgence for the length of this preface, let us attempt the theme in its utmost scope.

Chapter III—*That God is the Father of the Word, and the Creator of all Things; and that Material Objects could not continue to exist, were their Causes Various.*

God, who is ever above all existence, and the good which all things desire, has no origin, and therefore no beginning, being himself the originator of all things which receive existence. But he who proceeds from him is again united to him; and this separation from and union with him is not local, but intellectual in its character. For this generation was accompanied by no diminution of the Father's substance (as in the case of generation by seed); but by the determining act of foreknowledge God manifested a Saviour presiding over this sensible world, and all created things therein. From hence, then, is the source of existence and life to all things which are within the compass of this world; hence proceed the soul, and every sense; hence those organs through which the sense-perceptions are perfected. What, then, is the object of this argument? To prove that there is One director of all things that exist, and that all things, whether in heaven or on earth, both natural and organized bodies, are subject to his single sovereignty. For if the dominion of these things, numberless as they are, were in the hands, not of one but of many, there must be a partition and distribution of the elements, and the old fables would be true[70]; jealousy, too, and ambition, striving for superior power, would destroy the harmonious concord of the whole, while each of the many masters would regulate in a manner different from the rest the portion subject to his control. The fact, however, that this universal order is ever one and the same, is the proof that it is under the care of a superior power, and that its origin cannot be ascribed to chance. Else how could the author of universal

[70] [Alluding to the fabulous division of the world between the brothers Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto. Valesius *in loc.*—*Bag.*] Or rather Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades. Zeus had the heavens, Poseidon the sea, and Hades the underworld, while the earth remained "with high Olympus, common to us all"—a fruitful source of dissension.

nature ever be known? To whom first, or last, could prayers and supplications be addressed? Whom could I choose as the object of my worship, without being guilty of impiety towards the rest? Again, if haply I desired to obtain some temporal blessing, should I not, while expressing my gratitude to the Power who favored my request, convey a reproach to him who opposed it? Or to whom should I pray, when desiring to know the cause of my calamity, and to obtain deliverance? Or let us suppose that the answer is given by oracles and prophecies, but that the case is not within the scope of their authority, being the province of some other deity. Where, then, is mercy? where is the provident care of God for the human race? Unless, indeed, some more benevolent Power, assuming a hostile attitude against another who has no such feeling, be disposed to accord me his protection. Hence anger, discords, mutual censure, and finally universal confusion, would ensue, while each departed from his proper sphere of action, dissatisfied, through ambitious love of power, with his allotted portion. What, then, would be the result of these things? Surely this discord among the heavenly powers would prove destructive to the interests of earth; the orderly alternation of times and seasons would disappear; the successive productions of the earth would be enjoyed no more; the day itself, and the repose of night which follows it, would cease to be. But enough on this subject; let us once more resume that species of reasoning which admits of no reply.

Chapter IV—*On the Error of Idolatrous Worship.*

Whatever has had a beginning, has also an end. Now that which is a beginning in respect of time, is called a generation; and whatever is by generation is subject to corruption, and its beauty is impaired by the lapse of time. How, then, can they whose origin is from corruptible generation, be immortal? Again, this supposition has gained credit with the ignorant multitude, that marriages, and the birth of children, are usual among the gods. Granting, then, such offspring to be immortal, and continually produced, the race must of necessity multiply to excess; and if this were so, where is the heaven, or the earth, which could contain so vast and still increasing a multitude of gods? But what shall we say of those men who represent these celestial beings as joined in incestuous union with their

sister goddesses, and charge them with adultery and impurity? We declare, further, with all confidence, that the very honors and worship which these deities receive from men are accompanied by acts of wantonness and profligacy. Once more; the experienced and skillful sculptor, having formed the conception of his design, perfects his work according to the rules of art; and in a little while, as if forgetful of himself, idolizes his own creation, and adores it as an immortal god, while yet he admits that himself, the author and maker of the image, is a mortal man. Nay, they even show the graves and monuments of those whom they deem immortal, and bestow divine honors on the dead; not knowing that that which is truly blessed and incorruptible needs no distinction which perishable men can give; for that Being, who is seen by the mental eye, and conceived by the intellect alone, requires to be distinguished by no external form, and admits no figure to represent its character and likeness. But the honors of which we speak are given to those who have yielded to the power of death; they once were men, and tenants, while they lived, of a mortal body.

Chapter V—*That Christ, the Son of God, created All Things, and has appointed to Every Thing the Term of its Existence.*

But why do I defile my tongue with unhallowed words, when my object is to sound the praises of the true God? Rather let me cleanse myself, as it were, from this bitter draught by the pure stream which flows from the everlasting fountain of the virtue of that God who is the object of my praise. Be it my special province to glorify Christ, as well by the actions of my life, as by that thanksgiving which is due to him for the manifold and signal blessings which he has bestowed. I affirm, therefore, that he has laid the foundations of this universe; and conceived the race of men, ordaining these things by his word. And immediately he transferred our newly created parents (ignorant at first, according to his will, of good and evil) to a happy region, abounding in flowers and fruits of every kind[71]. At length,

[71] [Constantine seems to have supposed the Paradise of our first parents to be somewhere apart from this earth. In this fanciful idea, which is obviously indefensible from Scripture he is countenanced by the opinions of Tertullian, Tatian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Valentinian, and Jerome, some of whom placed it in or above the third heaven, others in the fourth, others again in a world superior to the present, &c. See the note of Valesius,

however, he appointed them a seat on earth befitting creatures endued with reason; and then unfolded to their faculties, as intelligent beings, the knowledge of good and evil. Then, too, he bade the race increase; and each healthy region of the world, as far as the bounds of the circumambient ocean, became the dwelling-place of men; while with this increase of numbers the invention of the useful arts went hand in hand. Meantime the various species of inferior animals increased in due proportion, each kind discovering some characteristic quality, the special gift of nature; the tame distinguished by gentleness and obedience to man; the wild by strength and swiftness, and an instinctive foresight which warned them to escape from peril. The gentler animals he placed entirely beneath man's protecting care, but entailed on him the necessity of strife with those of fiercer nature. He next created the feathered race, manifold in number, diverse in character and habits; brilliant with every variety of color, and endued with native powers of melody. Finally, having arranged with wise discrimination whatever else the compass of this world contains, and having assigned to every creature the stated term of its existence, he thus completed the beautiful order of the perfect whole.

Chapter VI—*The Falsity of the General Opinion respecting Fate is proved by the Consideration of Human Laws, and by the Works of Creation, the Course of which is not Fortuitous, but according to an Orderly Arrangement which evinces the Design of the Creator.*

The great majority, however, in their folly, ascribe the regulation of the universe to nature, while some imagine fate, or accident, to be the cause. With regard to those who attribute the control of all things to fate, they know not that in using this term they utter a mere word, but designate no active power, nor anything which has real and substantial existence. For what can this fate be, considered in itself, if nature be the first cause of all things? Or what shall we suppose nature itself to be, if the law of

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who quotes from some of these Fathers. In reference to what follows, we may ask, Was Constantine acquainted with, or does he avoid noticing, the circumstances of the fall?—*Bag.*] *Ans.* Constantine like many another to our own day seems to regard the "fall" as a fall upwards—that complacent optimism which ignores Scripture and Schopenhauer alike.

fate be inviolable? Indeed, the very assertion that there is a law of fate implies that such law is the work of a legislator; if, therefore, fate itself be a law, it must be a law devised by God. All things, therefore, are subject to God, and nothing is beyond the sphere of his power. If it be said that fate is the will of God, and is so considered, we admit the fact. But in what respect do justice, or self-control, or the other virtues, depend on fate? From whence, if so, do their contraries, as injustice and intemperance, proceed? For vice has its origin from nature, not from fate; and virtue is the due regulation of natural character and disposition. But, granting that the varied results of actions, whether right or erroneous in themselves, depend on fortune or fate; in what sense can the general principle of justice, the principle of rendering to every one his due, be ascribed to fate? Or how can it be said that laws, encouragements to virtue and dissuasives from what is evil, praise, blame, punishment, in short whatever operates as a motive to virtue, and deters from the practice of vice, derive their origin from fortune or accident, and not rather from that of justice, which is a characteristic attribute of the God of providence? For the events which befall men are consequent upon the tenor of their lives. Hence pestilence or sedition, famine and plenty, succeed in turn, declaring plainly and emphatically that all these things are regulated with reference to our course of life. For the Divine Being delights in goodness, but turns with aversion from all impiety; looks with acceptance on the humble spirit, but abhors presumption, and that pride which exalts itself above what becomes a creature. And though the proofs of these truths are clear and manifest to our sight, they appear in a still stronger light, when we collect, and as it were concentrate our thoughts within ourselves, and ponder their causes with deep attention. I say, then, that it becomes us to lead a life of modesty and gentleness, not suffering our thoughts to rise proudly above our natural condition, and ever mindful that God is near us, and is the observer of all our actions. But let us still farther test the truth of the proposition, that the order of the universe depends on chance or accident. Are we then to suppose that the stars and other heavenly bodies, the earth and sea, fire and wind, water and air, the succession of the seasons, the recurrence of summer and winter, that all these have an undesigned and fortuitous existence, and not rather that they proceed from the creative hand of God? Some, indeed, are so senseless as to say that most of these things have been devised by

mankind because of their need of them. Let it be admitted that this opinion has a semblance of reason in regard to earthly and corruptible things (though Nature herself supplies every good with a lavish hand); yet can we believe that things which are immortal and unchangeable are the inventions of men? These, indeed, and all things else which are beyond the reach of our senses, and comprehended by the intellect alone, receive their being, not from the material life of man, but from the intellectual and eternal essence of God. Again, the orderly arrangement of these things is the work of his providence; for instance, that the day, deriving radiance from the sun, is bright; that night succeeds his setting, and the starry host by which night itself is redeemed from total darkness. And what shall we say of the moon, which when most distant from, and opposite to the sun, is filled with light, but wanes in proportion to the nearness of her approach to him? Do not these things manifestly evince the intelligence and sagacious wisdom of God? Add to this that needful warmth of the solar rays which ripens the fruits of the earth; the currents of wind, so conducive to the fertility of the seasons; the cool and refreshing showers; and the harmony of all these things in accordance with which all are reasonably and systematically conducted; lastly, the everlasting order of the planets, which return to the self-same place at their appointed times; are not all these, as well as the perfect ministry of the stars, obedient to a divine law, evident proofs of the ordinance of God? Again, do the mountain heights, the deep and hollow valleys, the level and extensive plains, useful as they are, as well as pleasing to the eye, appear to exist independently of the will of God? Or do not the proportion and alternate succession of land and water, serviceable, the one for husbandry, the other for the transport of such foreign products as we need, afford a clear demonstration of his exact and proportionate providential care? For instance, the mountains contain a store of water, which the level ground receives, and after imbibing sufficient for the renovation of the soil, sends forth the residue into the sea, and the sea in turn passes it onward to the ocean. And still we dare to say that all these things happen by chance and accident; unable though we be to show by what shape or form this chance is characterized; a thing which has no foundation either in intellect or sense existence; which rings in our ears as the mere sound of an unsubstantial name!

Chapter VII—*In regard to Things above our Comprehension, we should glorify the Creator's Wisdom, and attribute their Causes to him alone, and not to Chance.*

In fact, this word "chance" is the expression of men who think in haphazard and illogical fashion; who are unable to understand the causes of these things, and who, owing to the feebleness of their own apprehensions, conceive that those things for which they cannot assign a reason, are ordered without reason. There are, unquestionably, some things which possess wonderful natural properties, and the full apprehension of which is very difficult; for example, the nature of hot springs. For no one can easily explain the cause of so powerful a fire; and it is indeed surprising that though surrounded on all sides by a body of cold water, it loses none of its native heat. These phenomena appear to be of rare occurrence throughout the world, being intended, I am persuaded, to afford to mankind convincing evidence of the power of that Providence which ordains that two directly opposite natures, heat and cold, should thus proceed from the self-same source. Many indeed, yea, numberless, are the gifts which God has bestowed for the comfort and enjoyment of man; and of these the fruit of the olive-tree and the vine deserve especial notice; the one for its power of renovating and cheering the soul, the other because it ministers to our enjoyment, and is likewise adapted for the cure of bodily disease. Marvelous, too, is the course of rivers, flowing night and day with unceasing motion, and presenting a type of ever-flowing, never-ceasing life; and equally wonderful is the alternate succession of day and night.

Chapter VIII—*That God bestows an Abundant Supply of whatever is suited to the Wants of Man, and ministers but sparingly to his Pleasures; in Both Cases with a View to his Advantage.*

Let what has been said suffice to prove that nothing exists without reason and intelligence, and that reason itself and providence are of God. It is he who has also distributed the metals, as gold, silver, copper, and the rest, in due proportion; ordaining an abundant supply of those which would be most needed and generally employed, while he dispensed those which serve the purposes merely of pleasure in adornment of luxury with a liberal and yet a sparing hand, holding a mean between parsimony and profusion.

For the searchers for metals, were those which are employed for ornament procured in equal abundance with the rest, would be impelled by avarice to despise and neglect to gather those which, like iron or copper, are serviceable for husbandry, or house-building, or the equipment of ships; and would care for those only which conduce to luxury and a superfluous excess of wealth. Hence it is, as they say, that the search for gold and silver is far more difficult and laborious than that for any other metals, the violence of the toil thus acting as a counterpoise to the violence of the desire. And how many instances might still further be enumerated of the workings of that Divine Providence which, in all the gifts which it has so unsparingly conferred upon us, plainly urges us to the practice of self-control and all other virtues, and leads us away from unbefitting covetousness! To trace the secret reasons of all these things is indeed a task which exceeds the power of human faculties. For how can the intellect of a frail and perishable being arrive at the knowledge of perfect truth, or apprehend in its purity the counsel of God from the beginning?

Chapter IX—*Of the Philosophers, who fell into Mistaken Notions, and Some of them into Danger, by their Desire of Universal Knowledge—Also of the Doctrines of Plato.*

We ought, therefore, to aim at objects which are within our power, and exceed not the capacities of our nature. For the persuasive influence of argument has a tendency to draw most of us away from the truth of things, which has happened to many philosophers, who have employed themselves in reasoning, and the study of natural science, and who, as often as the magnitude of the subject surpasses their powers of investigation, adopt various devices for obscuring the truth. Hence their diversities of judgment, and contentious opposition to each others' doctrines, and this notwithstanding their pretensions to wisdom. Hence, too, popular commotions have arisen, and severe sentences, passed by those in power, apprehensive of the overthrow of hereditary institutions, have proved destructive to many of the disputants themselves. Socrates, for example, elated by his skill in argumentation, indulging his power of making the worse appear the better reason, and playing continually with the subtleties of controversy, fell a victim to the slander of his own countrymen and

fellow-citizens. Pythagoras, too, who laid special claim to the virtues of silence and self-control, was convicted of falsehood. For he declared to the Italians that the doctrines which he had received during his travels in Egypt, and which had long before been divulged by the priests of that nation, were a personal revelation to himself from God. Lastly, Plato himself, the gentlest and most refined of all, who first essayed to draw men's thoughts from sensible to intellectual and eternal objects, and taught them to aspire to sublimer speculations, in the first place declared, with truth, a God exalted above every essence, but to him he added also a second, distinguishing them numerically as two, though both possessing one perfection, and the being of the second Deity proceeding from the first. For he is the creator and controller of the universe, and evidently supreme; while the second, as the obedient agent of his commands, refers the origin of all creation to him as the cause. In accordance, therefore, with the soundest reason, we may say that there is one Being whose care and providence are over all things, even God the Word, who has ordered all things; but the Word being God himself is also the Son of God. For by what name can we designate him except by this title of the Son, without falling into the most grievous error? For the Father of all things is properly considered the Father of his own Word. Thus far, then, Plato's sentiments were sound; but in what follows he appears to have wandered from the truth, in that he introduces a plurality of gods, to each of whom he assigns specific forms. And this has given occasion to still greater error among the unthinking portion of mankind, who pay no regard to the providence of the Supreme God, but worship images of their own devising, made in the likeness of men or other living beings. Hence it appears that the transcendent nature and admirable learning of this philosopher, tinged as they were with such errors as these, were by no means free from impurity and alloy. And yet he seems to me to retract, and correct his own words, when he plainly declares that a rational soul is the breath of God, and divides all things into two classes, intellectual and sensible; [the one simple, the other] consisting of bodily structure; the one comprehended by the intellect alone, the other estimated by the judgment and the senses. The former class, therefore, which partakes of the divine spirit, and is uncompounded and immaterial, is eternal, and inherits everlasting life; but the latter, being entirely resolved into the elements of which it is composed, has no share in everlasting life.

He farther teaches the admirable doctrine, that those who have passed a life of virtue, that is, the spirits of good and holy men, are enshrined, after their separation from the body, in the fairest mansions of heaven. A doctrine not merely to be admired, but profitable too. For who can believe in such a statement, and aspire to such a happy lot, without desiring to practice righteousness and temperance, and to turn aside from vice? Consistently with this doctrine he represents the spirits of the wicked as tossed like wreckage on the streams of Acheron and Pyriphlegethon.

Chapter X—*Of those who reject the Doctrines of Philosophers, as well as those of Scripture; and that we ought to believe the Poets in All Things, or disbelieve them in All.*

There are, however, some persons so infatuated, that when they meet with such sentiments as these, they are neither converted or alarmed; nay, they even treat them with contempt and scorn, as if they listened to the inventions of fable; applauding, perhaps, the beauty of the eloquence, but abhorring the severity of the precepts. And yet they give credence to the fictions of the poets, and make both civilized and barbarous countries ring with exploded and false tales. For the poets assert that the judgment of souls after death is committed to men whose parentage they ascribe to the gods, extolling their righteousness and impartiality and represent them as guardians of the dead. The same poets describe the battles of the gods and certain usages of war among them, and speak of them as subject to the power of fate. Some of these deities they picture to us as cruel, others as strangers to all care for the human race, and others again as hateful in their character. They introduce them also as mourning the slaughter of their own children, thus implying their inability to succor, not strangers merely, but those most dear to them. They describe them, too, as subject to human passions, and sing of their battles and wounds, their joys and sorrows. And in all this they appear worthy of belief. For if we suppose them to be moved by a divine impulse to attempt the poetic art, we are bound to believe them and to be persuaded of what they utter under this inspiration. They speak, then, of the calamities to which their divinities are subject; calamities which of course are altogether true! But it will be objected that it is the privilege of poets to lie, since the peculiar province of poetry is to charm the spirits of the

hearers, while the very essence of truth is that things told be in reality exactly what they are said to be. Let us grant that it is a characteristic of poetry occasionally to conceal the truth. But they who speak falsehood do it not without an object; being influenced either by a desire of personal gain or advantage, or possibly, being conscious of some evil conduct, they are induced to disguise the truth by dread of the threatening vengeance of the laws. But surely it were possible for them (in my judgment), by adhering faithfully to truth at least while treating of the nature of the Supreme Being, to avoid the guilt at once of falsehood and impiety.

Chapter XI—*On the Coming of our Lord in the Flesh; its Nature and Cause.*

Whoever, then, has pursued a course unworthy of a life of virtue, and is conscious of having lived an irregular and disorderly life, let him repent, and turn with enlightened spiritual vision to God; and let him abandon his past career of wickedness, content if he attain to wisdom even in his declining years. We, however, have received no aid from human instruction; nay, whatever graces of character are esteemed of good report by those who have understanding, are entirely the gift of God. And I am able to oppose no feeble buckler against the deadly weapons of Satan's armory; I mean the knowledge I possess of those things which are pleasing to him; and of these I will select such as are appropriate to my present design, while I proceed to sing the praises of the Father of all. But do thou, O Christ, Saviour of mankind, be present to aid me in my hallowed task! Direct the words which celebrate thy virtues, and instruct me worthily to sound thy praises. And now, let no one expect to listen to the graces of elegant language; for well I know that the nerveless eloquence of those who speak to charm the ear, and whose aim is rather applause than sound argument, is distasteful to hearers of sound judgment. It is asserted, then, by some profane and senseless persons, that Christ, whom we worship, was justly condemned to death, and that he who is the author of life to all, was himself deprived of life. That such an assertion should be made by those who have once dared to enter the paths of impiety, who have cast aside all fear, and all thought of concealing their own depravity, is not surprising. But it is beyond the bounds of folly itself that they should be able, as it

seems, really to persuade themselves that the incorruptible God yielded to the violence of men, and not rather to that love alone which he bore to the human race; that they should fail to perceive that divine magnanimity and forbearance is changed by no insult, is moved from its intrinsic steadfastness by no revilings; but is ever the same, breaking down and repelling, by the spirit of wisdom and greatness of soul, the savage fierceness of those who assail it. The gracious kindness of God had determined to abolish iniquity, and to exalt order and justice. Accordingly, he gathered a company of the wisest among men, and ordained that most noble and useful doctrine, which is calculated to lead the good and blessed of mankind to an imitation of his own providential care. And what higher blessing can we speak of than this, that God should prescribe the way of righteousness, and make those who are counted worthy of his instruction like himself; that goodness might be communicated to all classes of mankind, and eternal felicity be the result? This is the glorious victory; this the true power; this the mighty work, worthy of its author, the restoration of all people to soundness of mind; and the glory of this triumph we joyfully ascribe to thee, thou Saviour of all! But thou, vile and wretched blasphemy, whose glory is in lies and rumors and calumny; thy power is to deceive and prevail with the inexperience of youth, and with men who still retain the folly of youth. These thou seducest from the service of the true God, and settest up false idols as the objects of their worship and their prayers; and thus the reward of their folly awaits thy deluded victims; for they calumniate Christ, the author of every blessing, who is God, and the Son of God. Is not the worship of the best and wisest of the nations of this world worthily directed to that God, who, while possessing boundless power, remains immovably true to his own purpose, and retains undiminished his characteristic kindness and love to man? Away, then, ye impious, for still ye may while vengeance on your transgressions is yet withheld; begone to your sacrifices, your feasts, your scenes of revelry and drunkenness, wherein, under the semblance of religion, your hearts are devoted to profligate enjoyment, and pretending to perform sacrifices, yourselves are the willing slaves of your own pleasures. No knowledge have ye of any good, nor even of the first commandment of the mighty God, who both declares his will to man, and gives commission to his Son to direct the course of human life, that they who have passed a career of

virtue and self-control may obtain, according to the judgment of that Son, a second, yea, a blessed and happy existence. I have now declared the decree of God respecting the life which he prescribes to man, neither ignorantly, as many have done, nor resting on the ground of opinion or conjecture. But it may be that some will ask, Whence this title of Son? Whence this generation of which we speak, if God be indeed only One, and incapable of union with another? We are, however, to consider generation as of two kinds; one in the way of natural birth, which is known to all; the other, that which is the effect of an eternal cause, the mode of which is seen by the prescience of God, and by those among men whom he loves. For he who is wise will recognize the cause which regulates the harmony of creation. Since, then, nothing exists without a cause, of necessity the cause of existing substances preceded their existence. But since the world and all things that it contains exist, and are preserved, their preserver must have had a prior existence; so that Christ is the cause of preservation, and the preservation of things is an effect; even as the Father is the cause of the Son, and the Son the effect of that cause. Enough, then, has been said to prove his priority of existence. But how do we explain his descent to this earth, and to men? His motive in this, as the prophets had foretold, originated in his watchful care for the interests of all; for it needs must be that the Creator should care for his own works. But when the time came for him to assume a terrestrial body, and to sojourn on this earth, the need requiring, he devised for himself a new mode of birth. Conception was there, yet apart from marriage; childbirth, yet pure virginity; and a maiden became the mother of God! An eternal nature received a beginning of temporal existence; a sensible form of a spiritual essence, a material manifestation of incorporeal brightness, appeared. Alike wondrous were the circumstances which attended this great event. A radiant dove, like that which flew from the ark of Noah, alighted on the Virgin's bosom; and accordant with this impalpable union, purer than chastity, more guileless than innocence itself, were the results which followed. From infancy possessing the wisdom of God, received with reverential awe by the Jordan, in whose waters he was baptized, gifted with that royal unction, the spirit of universal intelligence; with knowledge and power to perform miracles, and to heal diseases beyond the reach of human art; he yielded a swift and unhindered assent to the prayers of men, to whose welfare, indeed, his whole life was devoted

without reserve. His doctrines instilled, not prudence only, but real wisdom; his hearers were instructed, not in the mere social virtues, but in the ways which conduct to the spiritual world; and devoted themselves to the contemplation of immutable and eternal things, and the knowledge of the Supreme Father. The benefits which he bestowed were no common blessings; for blindness, the gift of sight; for helpless weakness, the vigor of health; in the place of death, restoration to life again. I dwell not on that abundant provision in the wilderness, whereby a scanty measure of food became a complete and enduring supply for the wants of a mighty multitude. Thus do we render thanks to thee, our God and Saviour, according to our feeble power; unto thee, O Christ, supreme Providence of the mighty Father, who both savest us from evil, and impartest to us thy most blessed doctrine; for I say these things, not to praise, but to give thanks. For what mortal is he who shall worthily declare thy praise, of whom we learn that thou didst from nothing call creation into being, and illumine it with thy light; that thou didst regulate the confusion of the elements by the laws of harmony and order? But chiefly we mark thy loving-kindness, in that thou hast caused those whose hearts inclined to thee to desire earnestly a divine and blessed life, and hast provided that, like merchants of true blessings, they might impart to many others the wisdom and good fortune they had received; themselves, meanwhile, reaping the everlasting fruit of virtue. Freed from the trammels of vice, and imbued with the love of their fellow-men, they keep mercy ever before their eyes, and hoping for the promises of faith; devoted to modesty, and all those virtues which the past career of human life had thrown aside [but which were now restored by him whose providence is over all]. No other power could be found to devise a remedy for such evils, and for that spirit of injustice which had heretofore asserted its dominion over the race of men. Providence, however, could reach the circumstances even here, and with ease restored whatever had been disordered by violence and the licentiousness of human passion. And this restoring power he exercised without concealment. For he knew that, though there were some whose thoughts were able to recognize and understand his power, others there were whose brutish and senseless nature led them to rely exclusively on the testimony of their own senses. In open day, therefore, that no one, whether good or evil, might find room for doubt, he manifested his blessed and wondrous healing power;

restoring the dead to life again, and renewing with a word the powers of those who had been bereft of bodily sense. Can we, in short, suppose, that to render the sea firm as the solid ground, to still the raging of the storm, and finally to ascend to heaven, after turning the unbelief of men to steadfast faith by the performance of these wondrous acts, demanded less than almighty power, was less than the work of God? Nor was the time of his passion unaccompanied by like wonders; when the sun was darkened, and the shades of night obscured the light of day. Then terror everywhere laid hold upon the people, and the thought that the end of all things was already come, and that chaos, such as had been ere the order of creation began, would once more prevail. Then, too, the cause was sought of so terrible an evil, and in what respect the trespasses of men had provoked the wrath of Heaven; until God himself, who surveyed with calm dignity the arrogance of the ungodly, renewed the face of heaven, and adorned it with the host of stars. Thus the beclouded face of Nature was again restored to her pristine beauty.

Chapter XII—*Of those who are Ignorant of this Mystery; and that their Ignorance is Voluntary. The Blessings which await those who know it, especially such as die in the Confession of the Faith.*

But it will be said by some, who love to blaspheme, that it was in the power of God to ameliorate and soften the natural will of man. What better way, I ask, what better method could be devised, what more effectual effort put forth for reclaiming evil man, than converse with God himself? Was not he visibly present to teach them the principles of virtuous conduct? And if the personal instructions of God were without effect, how much more, had he continued absent and unheard? What, then, had power to hinder this most blessed doctrine? The perverse folly of man. For the clearness of our perceptions is at once obscured, as often as we receive with angry impatience those precepts which are given for our blessing and advantage. In truth, it was the very choice of men to disregard these precepts, and to turn a deaf ear to the commandments so distasteful to them; though had they listened, they would have gained a reward well worthy such attention, and that not for the present only, but the future life, which is indeed the only true life. For the reward of obedience to God

is imperishable and everlasting life, to which they may aspire who know him, and frame their course of life so as to afford a pattern to others, and as it were a perpetual standard for the imitation of those who desire to excel in virtue. Therefore was the doctrine committed to men of understanding, that the truths which they communicated might be kept with care and a pure conscience by the members of their households, and that thus a truthful and steadfast observance of God's commands might be secured, the fruit of which is that boldness in the prospect of death which springs from pure faith and genuine holiness before God. He who is thus armed can withstand the tempest of the world, and is sustained even to martyrdom by the invincible power of God, whereby he boldly overcomes the greatest terrors, and is accounted worthy of a crown of glory by him to whom he has thus nobly testified. Nor does he himself assume the praise, knowing full well that it is God who gives the power both to endure, and to fulfill with ready zeal the Divine commands. And well may such a course as this receive the meed of never-failing remembrance and everlasting honor. For as the martyr's life is one of sobriety and obedience to the will of God, so is his death an example of true greatness and generous fortitude of soul. Hence it is followed by hymns and psalms, words and songs of praise to the all-seeing God; and a sacrifice of thanksgiving is offered in memory of such men, a bloodless, a harmless sacrifice, wherein is no need of the fragrant frankincense, no need of fire; but only enough of pure light to suffice the assembled worshipers. Many, too, there are whose charitable spirit leads them to prepare a temperate banquet for the comfort of the needy, and the relief of those who had been driven from their homes; a custom which can only be deemed burdensome by those whose thoughts are not accordant with the divine and sacred doctrine.

Chapter XIII—*That there is a Necessary Difference between Created Things. That the Propensity to Good and Evil depends on the Will of Man; and that, consequently, Judgment is a Necessary and Reasonable Thing.*

There are, indeed, some who venture with childish presumption to find fault with God in respect of this also, and ask why it is that he has not created one and the same natural disposition for all, but rather has ordained the existence of many things different, nay, contrary in their

nature, whence arises the dissimilarity of our moral conduct and character. Would it not (say they) have been better, both as regards obedience to the commands of God, and a just apprehension of himself, and for the confirmation of individual faith, that all mankind should be of the same moral character? It is indeed ridiculous to expect that this could be the case, and to forget that the constitution of the world is different from that of the things that are in the world; that physical and moral objects are not identical in their nature, nor the affections of the body the same as those of the soul. [For the immortal soul far exceeds the material world in dignity, and is more blessed than the perishable and terrestrial creation, in proportion as it is noble and more allied to God.] Nor is the human race excluded from participation in the divine goodness; though this is not the lot of all indiscriminately, but of those only who search deeply into the Divine nature, and propose the knowledge of sacred things as the leading object of their lives.

Chapter XIV—*That Created Nature differs infinitely from Uncreated Being; to which Man makes the Nearest Approach by a Life of Virtue.*

Surely it must be the very height of folly to compare created with eternal things, which latter have neither beginning nor end, while the former, having been originated and called into being, and having received a commencement of their existence at some definite time, must consequently, of necessity have an end. How then can things which have thus been made, bear comparison with him who has ordained their being? Were this the case, the power to command their existence could not rightly be attributed to him. Nor can celestial things be compared to him, any more than the material with the intellectual world, or copies with the models from which they are formed. Nay, is it not absurd thus to confound all things, and to obscure the honor of God by comparing him with men, or even with beasts? And is it not characteristic of madmen, utterly estranged from a life of sobriety and virtue, to affect a power equivalent to that of God? If indeed we in any sense aspire to blessedness like that of God, our duty is to lead a life according to his commandments; so shall we, having finished a course consistent with the laws which he has prescribed, dwell for ever superior to the power of fate, in eternal and undecaying mansions.

For the only power in man which can be elevated to a comparison with that of God, is sincere and guileless service and devotion of heart to himself, with the contemplation and study of whatever pleases him, the raising our affections above the things of earth, and directing our thoughts, as far as we may, to high and heavenly objects; for from such endeavors, it is said, a victory accrues to us more valuable than many blessings. The cause, then, of that difference which subsists, as regards the inequality both of dignity and power in created beings, is such as I have described. In this the wise acquiesce with abundant thankfulness and joy; while those who are dissatisfied, display their own folly, and their arrogance will reap its due reward.

Chapter XV—*Of the Saviour's Doctrines and Miracles; and the Benefits he confers on those who own Subjection to him.*

The Son of God invites all men to the practice of virtue, and presents himself to all who have understanding hearts, as the teacher of his saving precepts. Unless, indeed, we will deceive ourselves; and remain in wretched ignorance of the fact, that for our advantage, that is, to secure the blessing of the human race, he went about upon earth; and, having called around him the best men of their age, committed to them instructions full of profit, and of power to preserve them in the path of a virtuous life; teaching them the faith and righteousness which are the true remedy against the adverse power of that malignant spirit whose delight it is to ensnare and delude the inexperienced. Accordingly he visited the sick, relieved the infirm from the ills which afflicted them, and consoled those who felt the extremity of penury and want. He commended also sound and rational sobriety of character, enjoining his followers to endure, with dignity and patience, every kind of injury and contempt; teaching them to regard such as visitations permitted by their Father, and the victory is ever theirs who nobly bear the evils which befall them. For he assured them that the highest strength of all consisted in this steadfastness of soul, combined with that philosophy which is nothing else than the knowledge of truth and goodness, producing in men the generous habit of sharing with their poorer brethren those riches which they have themselves acquired by honorable means. At the same time he utterly forbade all proud oppression, declaring

that, as he had come to associate with the lowly, so those who despised the lowly would be excluded from his favor. Such and so great was the test whereby he proved the faith of those who owned allegiance to his authority, and thus he not only prepared them for the contempt of danger and terror, but taught them at the same time the most genuine confidence in himself. Once, too, his rebuke was uttered to restrain the zeal of one of his companions, who yielded too easily to the impulse of passion, when he assaulted with the sword, and, eager to protect his Saviour's life, exposed his own. Then it was that he bade him desist, and returned his sword to its sheath, reproving him for his distrust of refuge and safety in himself, and declaring solemnly that all who should essay to retaliate an injury by like aggression, or use the sword, should perish by a violent death. This is indeed heavenly wisdom, to choose rather to endure than to inflict injury, and to be ready, should necessity so require, to suffer, but not to do, wrong. For since injurious conduct is in itself a most serious evil, it is not the injured party, but the injuring, on whom the heaviest punishment must fall. It is indeed possible for one who is subject to the will of God to avoid the evil both of committing and of suffering injury, provided his confidence be firm in the protection of that God whose aid is ever present to shield his servants from harm. For how should that man who trusts in God attempt to seek for resources in himself? In such a case he must abide the conflict with uncertainty of victory; and no man of understanding could prefer a doubtful to a certain issue. Again, how can that man doubt the presence and aid of God, who has had experience of manifold dangers, and has at all times been easily delivered, at his simple nod, from all terrors; who has passed, as it were, through the sea which was leveled by the Saviour's word, and afforded a solid road for the passage of the people? This is, I believe, the sure basis of faith, the true foundation of confidence, that we find such miracles as these performed and perfected at the command of the God of Providence. Hence it is that even in the midst of trial we find no cause to repent of our faith, but retain an unshaken hope in God; and when this habit of confidence is established in the soul, God himself dwells in the inmost thoughts. But he is of invincible power; the soul, therefore, which has within it him who is thus invincible, will not be overcome by the perils which may surround it. Likewise, we learn this truth from the victory of God himself, who, while intent on providing for the blessing of

mankind, though grievously insulted by the malice of the ungodly, yet passed unharmed through the sufferings of his passion, and gained a mighty conquest, an everlasting crown of triumph, over all iniquity; thus accomplishing the purpose of his own providence and love as regards the just, and destroying the cruelty of the impious and unjust.

Chapter XVI—*The Coming of Christ was predicted by the Prophets; and was ordained to be the Overthrow of Idols and Idolatrous Cities.*

Long since had his passion, as well as his advent in the flesh, been predicted by the prophets. The time, too, of his incarnation had been foretold, and the manner in which the fruits of iniquity and profligacy, so ruinous to the works and ways of righteousness, should be destroyed, and the whole world partake of the virtues of wisdom and sound discretion, through the almost universal prevalence of those principles of conduct which the Saviour should promulgate, over the minds of men; whereby the worship of God should be confirmed, and the rites of superstition utterly abolished. By these not the slaughter of animals alone, but the sacrifice of human victims, and the pollutions of an accursed worship, had been devised; as, for example, by the laws of Assyria and Egypt, the lives of innocent men were offered up in images of brass or earth. Therefore have these nations received a recompense worthy so foul a worship. Memphis and Babylon [it was declared] shall be wasted, and left desolate with their fathers' gods. Now these things I speak not from the report of others, but having myself been present, and actually seen the most wretched of these cities, the unfortunate Memphis. Moses desolated, at the Divine command, the land of the once mighty Pharaoh, whose arrogance was his destruction, and destroyed his army (which had proved victorious over numerous and mighty nations, an army strong in defenses and in arms), not by the flight of arrows or the hurling of hostile weapons, but by holy prayer alone, and quiet supplication.

Chapter XVII—*Of the Wisdom of Moses, which was an Object of Imitation to the Wise among Heathen Nations. Also concerning Daniel, and the Three Children.*

No nation has ever been more highly blessed than that which Moses led; none would have continued to enjoy higher blessings, had they not willingly withdrawn themselves from the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But who can worthily describe the praises of Moses himself; who, after reducing to order an unruly nation, and disciplining their minds to habits of obedience and respect, out of captivity restored them to a state of freedom, turned their mourning into gladness, and so far elevated their minds, that, through the excess of contrast with their former circumstances, and the abundance of their prosperity, the spirit of the people was elated with haughtiness and pride? So far did he surpass in wisdom those who had lived before him, that even the wise men and philosophers who are extolled by heathen nations aspired to imitate his wisdom. For Pythagoras, following his wisdom, attained to such a pitch of self-control, that he became to Plato, himself a model of discretion, the standard of his own self-mastery. Again, how great and terrible the cruelty of that ancient Syrian king, over whom Daniel triumphed, the prophet who unfolded the secrets of futurity, whose actions evinced transcendent greatness of soul, and the luster of whose character and life shone conspicuous above all? The name of this tyrant was Nebuchadnezzar, whose race afterward became extinct, and his vast and mighty power was transferred to Persian hands. The wealth of this tyrant was then, and is even now, celebrated far and wide, as well as his ill-timed devotion to unlawful worship, his idol statues, lifting their heads to heaven, and formed of various metals, and the terrible and savage laws ordained to uphold this worship. These terrors Daniel, sustained by genuine piety towards the true God, utterly despised, and predicted that the tyrant's unseasonable zeal would be productive of fearful evil to himself. He failed, however, to convince the tyrant (for excessive wealth is an effectual barrier to true soundness of judgment), and at length the monarch displayed the savage cruelty of his character, by commanding that the righteous prophet should be exposed to the fury of wild beasts. Noble, too, indeed was the united spirit exhibited by those brethren (whose example others have since followed, and have won surpassing glory by their faith in the Saviour's name), those, I mean, who stood unharmed in the fiery furnace, and the terrors appointed to devour them, repelling by the holy touch of their bodies the flame by which they were surrounded. On the overthrow of the Assyrian Empire, which was destroyed by

thunderbolts from Heaven, the providence of God conducted Daniel to the court of Cambyses the Persian king. Yet envy followed him even here; nor envy only, but the deadly plots of the magians against his life, with a succession of many and urgent dangers, from all which he was easily delivered by the providential care of Christ, and shone conspicuous in the practice of every virtue. Three times in the day did he present his prayers to God, and memorable were the proofs of supernatural power which he displayed; and hence the magians, filled with envy at the very efficacy of his petitions, represented the possession of such power to the king as fraught with danger, and prevailed on him to adjudge this distinguished benefactor of the Persian people to be devoured by savage lions. Daniel, therefore, thus condemned, was consigned to the lions' den (not indeed to suffer death, but to win unfading glory); and though surrounded by these ferocious beasts of prey, he found them more gentle than the men who had enclosed him there. Supported by the power of calm and steadfast prayer, he was enabled to subdue all these animals, ferocious as, by nature, they were. Cambyses, on learning the event (for so mighty a proof of Divine power could not possibly be concealed), amazed at the marvelous story, and repenting the too easy credence he had given to the slanderous charges of the magians, resolved, notwithstanding, to be himself a witness of the spectacle. But when he saw the prophet with uplifted hands rendering praises to Christ, and the lions crouching, and as it were worshiping, at his feet, immediately he adjudged the magians, to whose persuasions he had listened, to perish by the self-same sentence, and shut them up in the lions' den. The beasts, erewhile so gentle, rushed at once upon their victims, and with all the fierceness of their nature tore and destroyed them all.

Chapter XVIII—*Of the Erythræan Sibyl, who pointed in a Prophetic Acrostic at our Lord and his Passion. The Acrostic is "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, Cross."*

My desire, however, is to derive even from foreign sources a testimony to the Divine nature of Christ. For on such testimony it is evident that even those who blaspheme his name must acknowledge that he is God, and the Son of God if indeed they will accredit the words of those whose sentiments coincided with their own. The Erythræan Sibyl, then, who

herself assures us that she lived in the sixth generation after the flood, was a priestess of Apollo, who wore the sacred fillet in imitation of the God she served, who guarded also the tripod encompassed with the serpent's folds, and returned prophetic answers to those who approached her shrine; having been devoted by the folly of her parents to this service, a service productive of nothing good or noble, but only of indecent fury, such as we find recorded in the case of Daphne[72]. On one occasion, however, having rushed into the sanctuary of her vain superstition, she became really filled with inspiration from above, and declared in prophetic verses the future purposes of God; plainly indicating the advent of Jesus by the initial letters of these verses, forming an acrostic in these words: Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, Cross. The verses themselves are as follows:

Judgment! Earth's oozing pores shall mark the day;
Earth's heavenly king his glories shall display;
Sovereign of all, exalted on his throne,
Unnumbered multitudes their God shall own;
Shall see their Judge, with mingled joy and fear,
Crowned with his saints, in human form appear.
How vain, while desolate earth's glories lie,
Riches, and pomp, and man's idolatry!
In that dread hour, when Nature's fiery doom
Startles the slumb'ring tenants of the tomb,
Trembling all flesh shall stand; each secret wile,
Sins long forgotten, thoughts of guilt and guile,
Open beneath God's searching light shall lie;
No refuge then, but hopeless agony.
O'er heaven's expanse shall gathering shades of night
From earth, sun, stars, and moon, withdraw their light;
God's arm shall crush each mountain's towering pride;
On ocean's plain no more shall navies ride.
Dried at the source, no river's rushing sound
Shall soothe, no fountain slake the parched ground.
Around, afar, shall roll the trumpet's blast,

[72] [Daughter of Tiresias, and priestess at Delphi. She was called Sibyl, on account of the wildness of her looks and expressions when she delivered oracles (Lempriere in voc.)—*Bag.*]

Voice of wrath long delayed, revealed at last.
In speechless awe, while earth's foundations groan,
On judgment's seat earth's kings their God shall own.
Uplifted then, in majesty divine,
Radiant with light, behold Salvation's Sign!
Cross of that Lord, who, once for sinners given,
Reviled by man, now owned by earth and heaven,
O'er every land extends his iron sway.
Such is the name these mystic lines display;
Saviour, eternal king, who bears our sins away[73].

It is evident that the virgin uttered these verses under the influence of Divine inspiration. And I cannot but esteem her blessed, whom the Saviour thus selected to unfold his gracious purpose towards us.

Chapter XIX—*That this Prophecy respecting our Saviour was not the Fiction of any Member of the Christian Church, but the Testimony of the Erythræan Sibyl, whose Books were translated into Latin by Cicero before the coming of Christ. Also that Virgil makes mention of the same, and of the Birth of the Virgin's Child; though he spoke obscurely of this Mystery from Fear of the Ruling Powers.*

Many, however, who admit that the Erythræan Sibyl was really a prophetess, yet refuse to credit this prediction, and imagine that some one professing our faith, and not unacquainted with the poetic art, was the composer of these verses. They hold, in short, that they are a forgery, and alleged to be the prophecies of the Sibyl on the ground of their containing useful moral sentiments, tending to restrain licentiousness, and to lead man to a life of sobriety and decorum. Truth, however, in this case is evident, since the diligence of our countrymen has made a careful computation of the times; so that there is no room to suspect that this poem was composed after the advent and condemnation of Christ, or that the general report is false, that the verses were a prediction of the Sibyl in an

[73] [It can scarcely be necessary to observe that the acrostic, the general sense of which has been aimed at in the above translation, must be regarded as the pious fiction of some writer, whose object was to recommend the truth of Christianity to heathens by an appeal to the authority of an (alleged) ancient heathen prophecy—*Bag.*]

early age. For it is allowed that Cicero was acquainted with this poem, which he translated into the Latin tongue, and incorporated with his own works. This writer was put to death during the ascendancy of Antony, who in his turn was conquered by Augustus, whose reign lasted fifty-six years. Tiberius succeeded, in whose age it was that the Saviour's advent enlightened the world, the mystery of our most holy religion began to prevail, and as it were a new race of men commenced; of which, I suppose, the prince of Latin poets thus speaks:

Behold, a new, a heaven-born race appears.
And again, in another passage of the Bucolics;
Sicilian Muses, sound a loftier strain.
What can be clearer than this? For he adds,
The voice of Cuma's oracle is heard again.

Evidently referring to the Cumæan Sibyl. Nor was even this enough; the poet goes further, as if irresistibly impelled to bear his testimony. What then does he say?

Behold! the circling years new blessings bring;
The virgin comes, with her the long-desired king.

Who, then, is the virgin who was to come? Is it not she who was filled with, and with child of the Holy Spirit? And why is it impossible that she who was with child of the Holy Spirit should be, and ever continue to be a virgin? This king, too, will return, and by his coming lighten the sorrows of the world. The poet adds,

Thou, chaste Lucina, greet the new-born child,
Beneath whose reign the iron offspring ends,
A golden progeny from heaven descends;
His kingdom banished virtue shall restore,
And crime shall threat the guilty world no more.

We perceive that these words are spoken plainly and at the same time darkly, by way of allegory. Those who search deeply for the import of the words, are able to discern the Divinity of Christ. But lest any of the powerful in the imperial city might be able to accuse the poet of writing anything contrary to the laws of the country, and subverting the religious sentiments which had prevailed from ancient times, he intentionally

obscures the truth. For he was acquainted, as I believe, with that blessed mystery which gave to our Lord the name of Saviour; but, that he might avoid the severity of cruel men, he drew the thoughts of his hearers to objects with which they were familiar, saying that altars must be erected, temples raised, and sacrifices offered to the new-born child. His concluding words also are adapted to the sentiments of those who were accustomed to such a creed; for he says:

Chapter XX—*A Farther Quotation from Virgilius Maro respecting Christ, with its Interpretation, showing that the Mystery was indicated therein darkly, as might be expected from a Poet.*

A life immortal he shall lead, and be
By heroes seen, himself shall heroes see;
Evidently meaning the righteous.
The jarring nations he in peace shall bind,
And with paternal virtues rule mankind.
Unbidden earth her earliest fruits shall bring,
And fragrant herbs, to greet her infant king.

Well indeed was this admirably wise and accomplished man acquainted with the cruel character of the times. He proceeds:

The goats, uncall'd, full udders home shall bear;
The lowing herds no more fierce lions fear.
Truly said; for faith will not stand in awe of the mighty in the imperial palace.
His cradle shall with rising flowers be crown'd;
The serpent's brood shall die; the sacred ground
Shall weeds and poisonous plants refuse to bear;
Each common bush th' Assyrian rose shall wear.

Nothing could be said more true or more consistent with the Saviour's excellency than this. For the power of the Divine Spirit presents the very cradle of God, like fragrant flowers, to the new-born race. The serpent, too, and the venom of that serpent, perishes, who originally beguiled our first parents, and drew their thoughts from their native innocence to the enjoyment of pleasures, that they might experience that threatened

death. For before the Saviour's advent, the serpent's power was shown in subverting the souls of those who were sustained by no well-grounded hope, and ignorant of that immortality which awaits the righteous. But after that he had suffered, and was separated for a season from the body which he had assumed, the power of the resurrection was revealed to man through the communication of the Holy Spirit; and whatever stain of human guilt might yet remain was removed by the washing of sacred lustrations.

Then indeed could the Saviour bid his followers be of good cheer, and, remembering his adorable and glorious resurrection, expect the like for themselves. Truly, then, the poisonous race may be said to be extinct. Death himself is extinct, and the truth of the resurrection sealed. Again, the Assyrian race is gone, which first led the way to faith in God. But when he speaks of the growth of amomum every where, he alludes to the multitude of the true worshipers of God. For it is as though a multitude of branches, crowned with fragrant flowers, and fitly watered, sprung from the self-same root. Most justly said, Maro, thou wisest of poets! and with this all that follows is consistent.

But when heroic worth his youth shall hear,
And learn his father's virtues to revere.

By the praises of heroes, he indicates the works of righteous men; by the virtues of his Father he speaks of the creation and everlasting structure of the world; and, it may be, of those laws by which God's beloved Church is guided, and ordered in a course of righteousness and virtue. Admirable, again, is the advance to higher things of that state of life which is intermediate, as it were, between good and evil, and which seldom admits a sudden change:

Unlabored harvests shall the fields adorn,
That is, the fruit of the Divine law springs up for the service of men.
And clustered gropes shall blush on every thorn.
Far otherwise has it been during the corrupt and lawless period of human life.
The knotted oaks shall showers of honey weep.

He here describes the folly and obduracy of the men of that age; and

perhaps he also intimates that they who suffer hardships in the cause of God, shall reap sweet fruits of their own endurance.

Yet, of old fraud some footsteps shall remain;
The merchant still shall plough the deep for gain;
Great cities shall with walls be compassed round,
And sharpened shares shall vex the fruitful ground;
Another Tiphys shall new seas explore;
Another Argo land the chiefs upon the Iberian shore;
Another Helen other wars create,
And great Achilles urge the Trojan fate.

Well said, wisest of bards! Thou hast carried the license of a poet precisely to the proper point. For it was not thy purpose to assume the functions of a prophet, to which thou hadst no claim. I suppose also he was restrained by a sense of the danger which threatened one who should assail the credit of ancient religious practice. Cautiously, therefore, and securely, as far as possible, he presents the truth to those who have faculties to understand it; and while he denounces the munitions and conflicts of war (which indeed are still to be found in the course of human life), he describes our Saviour as proceeding to the war against Troy, understanding by Troy the world itself. And surely he did maintain the struggle against the opposing powers of evil, sent on that mission both by the designs of his own providence and the commandment of his Almighty Father. How, then, does the poet proceed?

But when to ripen'd manhood he shall grow,
That is, when, having arrived at the age of manhood,
He shall utterly remove the evils which encompass the path of human life,
And tranquilize the world by the blessings of peace;
The greedy sailor shall the seas forego;
No keel shall cut the waves for foreign ware,
For every soil shall every product bear.
The laboring hind his oxen shall disjoin;
No plough shall hurt the glebe, no pruning-hook the vine;
Nor wool shall in dissembled colors shine;
But the luxurious father of the fold,

With native purple, and unborrow'd gold,
Beneath his pompous fleece shall proudly sweat;
And under Tyrian robes the lamb shall bleat.
Mature in years, to ready honors move,
O of celestial seed, O foster son of Jove!
See, laboring nature calls thee to sustain
The nodding flame of heaven, and earth, and main!
See to their base restored, earth, seas, and air;
And joyful ages, from behind, in crowing ranks appear.
To sing thy praise, would heaven my breath prolong.
Infusing spirits worthy such a song,
Not Thracian Orpheus should transcend my lays,
Nor Linus, crown'd with never-fading bays;
Though each his heavenly parent should inspire;
The Muse instruct the voice, and Phœbus tune the lyre.
Should Pan contend in verse, and thou my theme,
Arcadian judges should their God condemn.
Behold (says he) how the mighty world and the elements together manifest their joy.

Chapter XXI—*That these Things cannot have been spoken of a Mere Man; and that Unbelievers, owing to their Ignorance of Religion, know not even the Origin of their own Existence.*

It may be some will foolishly suppose that these words were spoken of the birth of a mere ordinary mortal. But if this were all, what reason could there be that the earth should need neither seed nor plough, that the vine should require no pruning-hook, or other means of culture? How can we suppose these things to be spoken of a mere mortal's birth? For nature is the minister of the Divine will, not an instrument obedient to the command of man. Indeed, the very joy of the elements indicates the advent of God, not the conception of a human being. The prayer, too, of the poet that his life might be prolonged is a proof of the Divinity of him whom he invoked; for we desire life and preservation from God, and not from man. Indeed, the Erythræan Sibyl thus appeals to God: "Why, O Lord, dost thou compel me still to foretell the future, and not rather

remove me from this earth to await the blessed day of thy coming?" And Maro adds to what he had said before:

Begin, sweet boy! with smiles thy mother know,
Who ten long months did with thy burden go.
No mortal parents smiled upon thy birth;
No nuptial joy thou know'st, no feast of earth.

How could his parents have smiled on him? For his Father is God, who is a Power without sensible quality, existing, not in any definite shape, but as comprehending other beings, and not, therefore, in a human body. And who knows not that the Holy Spirit has no participation in the nuptial union? For what desire can exist in the disposition of that good which all things else desire? What fellowship, in short, can wisdom hold with pleasure? But let these arguments be left to those who ascribe to him a human origin, and who care not to purify themselves from all evil in word as well as deed. On thee, Piety, I call to aid my words, on thee who art the very law of purity, most desirable of all blessings, teacher of holiest hope, assured promise of immortality! Thee, Piety, and thee, Clemency, I adore. We who have obtained thine aid owe thee everlasting gratitude for thy healing power. But the multitudes whom their innate hatred of thyself deprives of thy succor, are equally estranged from God himself, and know not that the very cause of their life and being, and that of all the ungodly, is connected with the rightful worship of him who is Lord of all; for the world itself is his, and all that it contains.

Chapter XXII—*The Emperor thankfully ascribes his Victories and all other Blessings to Christ; and condemns the Conduct of the Tyrant Maximin, the Violence of whose Persecution had enhanced the Glory of Religion.*

To thee, Piety, I ascribe the cause of my own prosperity, and of all that I now possess. To this truth the happy issue of all my endeavors bears testimony; brave deeds, victories in war, and triumphs over conquered foes. This truth the great city itself allows with joy and praise. The people, too, of that much-loved city accord in the same sentiment, though once, deceived by ill-grounded hopes, they chose a ruler unworthy of themselves, a ruler who speedily received the chastisement which his audacious deeds

deserved. But be it far from me now to recall the memory of these events, while holding converse with thee, Piety, and essaying with earnest endeavor to address thee with holy and gentle words. Yet will I say one thing, which haply shall not be unbefitting or unseemly. A furious, a cruel, and implacable war was maintained by the tyrants against thee, Piety, and thy holy churches; nor were there wanting some in Rome itself who exulted at a calamity so grievous to the public weal. Nay, the battlefield was prepared; when thou didst stand forth, and present thyself a voluntary victim, supported by faith in God. Then indeed it was that the cruelty of ungodly men, which raged incessantly like a devouring fire, wrought for thee a wondrous and ever memorable glory. Astonishment seized the spectators themselves, when they beheld the very executioners who tortured the bodies of their holy victims wearied out, and disgusted at the cruelties; the bonds loosened, the engines of torture powerless, the flames extinguished, while the sufferers preserved their constancy unshaken even for a moment. What, then, hast thou gained by these atrocious deeds, most impious of men? And what was the cause of thy insane fury? Thou wilt say, doubtless, these acts of thine were done in honor of the gods. What gods are these? or what worthy conception hast thou of the Divine nature? Thinkest thou the gods are subject to angry passions as thou art? Were it so indeed, it had been better for thee to wonder at their strange determination than obey their harsh command, when they urged thee to the unrighteous slaughter of innocent men. Thou wilt allege, perhaps, the customs of thy ancestors and the opinion of mankind in general, as the cause of this conduct. I grant the fact; for those customs are very like the acts themselves, and proceed from the self-same source of folly. Thou thoughtest, it may be, that some special power resided in images formed and fashioned by human art; and hence thy reverence, and diligent care lest they should be defiled; those mighty and highly exalted gods, thus dependent on the care of men!

Chapter XXIII—*Of Christian Conduct. That God is pleased with those who lead a Life of Virtue; and that we must expect a Judgment and Future Retribution.*

Compare our religion with your own. Is there not with us genuine concord, and unwearied love of others? If we reprove a fault, is not our

object to admonish, not to destroy; our correction for safety, not for cruelty? Do we not exercise, not only sincere faith towards God, but fidelity in the relations of social life? Do we not pity the unfortunate? Is not ours a life of simplicity which disdains to cover evil beneath the mask of fraud and hypocrisy? Do we not acknowledge the true God, and his undivided sovereignty? This is real godliness; this is religion sincere and truly undefiled; this is the life of wisdom; and they who have it are travelers, as it were, on a noble road which leads to eternal life. For he who has entered on such a course, and keeps his soul pure from the pollutions of the body, does not wholly die; rather may he be said to complete the service appointed him by God, than to die. Again, he who confesses allegiance to God is not easily overborne by insolence or rage, but nobly stands under the pressure of necessity and the trial of his constancy is as it were, a passport to the favor of God. For we cannot doubt that the Deity is pleased with excellence in human conduct. For it would be absurd indeed if the powerful and the humble alike acknowledge gratitude to those from whose services they receive benefit, and repay them by services in return, and yet that he who is supreme and sovereign of all, nay, who is Good itself, should be negligent in this respect. Rather does he follow us throughout the course of our lives, is near us in every act of goodness, accepts, and at once rewards our virtue and obedience; though he defers the full recompense to that future period, when the actions of our lives shall pass under his review and when those who are clear in that account shall receive the reward of everlasting life, while the wicked shall be visited with the penalties due to their crimes.

Chapter XXIV—*Of Decius, Valerian, and Aurelian, who experienced a Miserable End in consequence of their Persecution of the Church.*

To thee, Decius, I now appeal, who has trampled with insult on the labors of the righteous; to thee, the hater of the Church, the punisher of those who lived a holy life; what is now thy condition after death? How hard and wretched thy present circumstances! Nay, the interval before thy death gave proof enough of thy miserable fate, when overthrown with all thine army on the plains of Scythia, thou didst expose the vaunted power of Rome to the contempt of the Goths. Thou, too, Valerian, who didst

manifest the same spirit of cruelty towards the servants of God, hast afforded an example of righteous judgment. A captive in the enemies' hands, led in chains while yet arrayed in the purple and imperial attire, and at last thy skin stripped from thee, and preserved by command of Sapor the Persian king, thou hast left a perpetual trophy of thy calamity. And thou, Aurelian, fierce perpetrator of every wrong, how signal was thy fall, when, in the midst of thy wild career in Thrace, thou wast slain on the public highway, and didst fill the furrows of the road with thine impious blood!

Chapter XXV—*Of Diocletian, who ignobly abdicated the Imperial Throne, and was terrified by the Dread of Lightning for his Persecution of the Church.*

Diocletian, however, after the display of relentless cruelty as a persecutor, evinced a consciousness of his own guilt and owing to the affliction of a disordered mind, endured the confinement of a mean and separate dwelling. What then, did he gain by his active hostility against our God? Simply this I believe, that he passed the residue of his life in continual dread of the lightning's stroke. Nicomedia attests the fact; eyewitnesses, of whom I myself am one, declare it. The palace, and the emperor's private chamber were destroyed, consumed by lightning, devoured by the fire of heaven. Men of understanding hearts had indeed predicted the issue of such conduct; for they could not keep silence, nor conceal their grief at such unworthy deeds; but boldly and openly expressed their feeling, saying one to another; "What madness is this? and what an insolent abuse of power, that man should dare to fight against God; should deliberately insult the most holy and just of all religions; and plan, without the slightest provocation, the destruction of so great a multitude of righteous persons? O rare example of moderation to his subjects! Worthy instructor of his army in the care and protection due to their fellow-citizens! Men who had never seen the backs of a retreating army plunged their swords into the breasts of their own countrymen!" So great was the effusion of blood shed, that if shed in battle with barbarian enemies, it had been sufficient to purchase a perpetual peace. At length, indeed, the providence of God took vengeance on these unhallowed deeds; but not without severe damage to the state. For the entire army of the emperor of whom I have just spoken,

becoming subject to the authority of a worthless person[74], who had violently usurped the supreme authority at Rome (when the providence of God restored freedom to that great city), was destroyed in several successive battles. And when we remember the cries with which those who were oppressed, and who ardently longed for their native liberty implored the help of God; and their praise and thanksgiving to him on the removal of the evils under which they had groaned, when that liberty was regained, and free and equitable intercourse restored; do not these things every way afford convincing proofs of the providence of God, and his affectionate regard for the interests of mankind?

Chapter XXVI—*The Emperor ascribes his Personal Piety to God; and shows that we are bound to seek Success from God, and attribute it to him; but to consider Mistakes as the Result of our own Negligence.*

When men commend my services, which owe their origin to the inspiration of Heaven, do they not clearly establish the truth that God is the cause of the exploits I have performed? Assuredly they do; for it belongs to God to do whatever is best, and to man, to perform the commands of God. I believe, indeed, the best and noblest course of action is, when, before an attempt is made, we provide as far as possible for a secure result; and surely all men know that the holy service in which these hands have been employed has originated in pure and genuine faith towards God; that whatever has been done for the common welfare has been effected by active exertion combined with supplication and prayer; the consequence of which has been as great an amount of individual and public benefit as each could venture to hope for himself and those he holds most dear. They have witnessed battles, and have been spectators of a war in which the providence of God

[74] ["He means Maxentius, as appears from what follows. How Diocletian's army came under the command of Maxentius, it is not difficult to understand. After Diocletian's abdication, Galerius Maximian took the command of his forces, giving part to Severus Cæsar for the defence of Italy. Shortly afterwards, Maxentius having usurped the Imperial power at Rome, Galerius sent Severus against him with his forces. Maxentius, however, fraudulently and by promises corrupted and drew to his own side Severus's army. After this, Galerius, having marched against Maxentius with a more numerous force, was himself in like manner deserted by his troops. Thus the army of Diocletian came under the power of Maxentius" (Valesius ad loc.)—*Bag.*]

has granted victory to this people; they have seen how he has favored and seconded our prayers. For righteous prayer is a thing invincible; and no one fails to attain his object who addresses holy supplication to God; nor is a refusal possible, except in the case of wavering faith; for God is ever favorable, ever ready to approve of human virtue. While, therefore, it is natural for man occasionally to err, yet God is not the cause of human error. Hence it becomes all pious persons to render thanks to the Saviour of all, first for our own individual security, and then for the happy posture of public affairs; at the same time intreating the favor of Christ with holy prayers and constant supplications, that he would continue to us our present blessings. For he is the invincible ally and protector of the righteous; he is the supreme judge of all things, the prince of immortality, the Giver of everlasting life.

The Oration of Eusebius Pamphilus

in praise of the Emperor Constantine.
Pronounced on the thirtieth anniversary of his reign.

Prologue to the Oration[75].

I come not forward prepared with a fictitious narrative, nor with elegance of language to captivate the ear, desiring to charm my hearers as it were, with a siren's voice; nor shall I present the draught of pleasure in cups of gold decorated with lovely flowers (I mean the graces of style) to those who are pleased with such things. Rather would I follow the precepts of the wise, and admonish all to avoid and turn aside from the beaten road, and keep themselves from contact with the vulgar crowd.

I come, then, prepared to celebrate our emperor's praises in a newer strain; and, though the number be infinite of those who desire to be my companions in my present task, I am resolved to shun the common track of men, and to pursue that untrodden path which it is unlawful to enter on with unwashed feet. Let those who admire a vulgar style, abounding in puerile subtleties, and who court a pleasing and popular muse, essay, since pleasure is the object they have in view, to charm the ears of men by a narrative of merely human merits. Those, however who are initiated into the universal science, and have attained to Divine as well as human knowledge, and account the choice of the latter as the real excellence, will prefer those virtues of the emperor which Heaven itself approves, and his pious actions, to his merely human accomplishments; and will leave to inferior encomiasts the task of celebrating his lesser merits.

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[75] The conventional heading has been retained. Literally it is "Tricennial oration of Eusebius, addressed to the Emperor Constantine. Prologue to the praises addressed to Constantine." The translation of this oration shows, even more than that of the *Life* or Constantine's *Oration,* a sympathy on the part of the translator with the florid style of Eusebius, and, trying as the style itself is, the success of *Bag.* in presenting the spirit of the original with, on the whole, very considerable accuracy of rendering has been a constant matter of surprise during the effort to revise.

For since our emperor is gifted as well with that sacred wisdom which has immediate reference to God, as with the knowledge which concerns the interests of men; let those who are competent to such a task describe his secular acquirements, great and transcendent as they are, and fraught with advantage to mankind (for all that characterizes the emperor is great and noble), yet still inferior to his diviner qualifies, to those who stand without the sacred precincts.

Let those, however, who are within the sanctuary, and have access to its inmost and untrodden recesses, close the doors against every profane ear, and unfold, as it were, the secret mysteries of our emperor's character to the initiated alone. And let those who have purified their ears in the streams of piety, and raised their thoughts on the soaring wing of the mind itself, join the company which surrounds the Sovereign Lord of all, and learn in silence the divine mysteries.

Meanwhile let the sacred oracles, given, not by the spirit of divination (or rather let me say of madness and folly), but by the inspiration of Divine truth, be our instructors in these mysteries; speaking to us of sovereignty, generally; of him who is the Supreme Sovereign of all, and the heavenly array which surrounds the Lord of all; of that exemplar of imperial power which is before us, and that counterfeit coin; and, lastly, of the consequences which result from both. With these oracles, then, to initiate us in the knowledge of the sacred rites, let us essay, as follows, the commencement of our divine mysteries.

Chapter I—*The Oration.*

To-day is the festival of our great emperor; and we his children rejoice therein, feeling the inspiration of our sacred theme. He who presides over our solemnity is the Great Sovereign himself; he, I mean, who is truly great; of whom I affirm (nor will the sovereign who hears me be offended, but will rather approve of this ascription of praise to God), that HE is above and beyond all created things, the Highest, the Greatest, the most Mighty One; whose throne is the arch of heaven, and the earth the footstool of his feet. His being none can worthily comprehend; and the ineffable splendor of the glory which surrounds him repels the gaze of every eye

from his Divine majesty.

His ministers are the heavenly hosts; his armies the supernal powers, who own allegiance to him as their Master, Lord, and King. The countless multitudes of angels, the companies of archangels, the chorus of holy spirits, draw from and reflect his radiance as from the fountains of everlasting light. Yea every light, and specially those divine and incorporeal intelligences whose place is beyond the heavenly sphere, celebrate this august Sovereign with lofty and sacred strains of praise. The vast expanse of heaven, like an azure veil, is interposed between those without, and those who inhabit his royal mansions; while round this expanse the sun and moon, with the rest of the heavenly luminaries (like torch-bearers around the entrance of the imperial palace), perform, in honor of their sovereign, their appointed courses; holding forth, at the word of his command, an ever-burning light to those whose lot is cast in the darker regions without the pale of heaven.

And surely when I remember that our own victorious emperor renders praises to this Mighty Sovereign, I do well to follow him, knowing as I do that to him alone we owe that imperial power under which we live. The pious Cæsars, instructed by their father's wisdom, acknowledge him as the source of every blessing; the soldiery, the entire body of the people, both in the country and in the cities of the empire, with the governors of the several provinces, assembling together in accordance with the precept of their great Saviour and Teacher, worship him. In short, the whole family of mankind, of every nation, tribe, and tongue, both collectively and severally, however diverse their opinions on other subjects, are unanimous in this one confession; and, in obedience to the reason implanted in them, and the spontaneous and uninstructed impulse of their own minds, unite in calling on the One and only God.

Nay, does not the universal frame of earth acknowledge him her Lord, and declare, by the vegetable and animal life which she produces her subjection to the will of a superior Power? The rivers, flowing with abundant stream, and the perennial fountains, springing from hidden and exhaustless depths, ascribe to him the cause of their marvelous source. The mighty waters of the sea, enclosed in chambers of unfathomable depth, and the swelling surges, which lift themselves on high, and menace as it were

the earth itself, shrink back when they approach the shore, checked by the power of his Divine law. The duly measured fall of winter's rain, the rolling thunder, the lightning's flash, the eddying currents of the winds, and the airy courses of the clouds, all reveal his presence to those to whom his Person is invisible.

The all-radiant sun, who holds his constant career through the lapse of ages, owns him Lord alone, and obedient to his will, dares not depart from his appointed path. The inferior splendor of the moon, alternately diminished and increased at stated periods, is subject to his Divine command. The beauteous mechanism of the heavens, glittering with the hosts of stars, moving in harmonious order, and preserving the measure of each several orbit, proclaims him the giver of all light; yea, all the heavenly luminaries maintaining at his will and word a grand and perfect unity of motion, pursue the track of their ethereal career, and complete in the lapse of revolving ages their distant course. The alternate recurrence of day and night, the changing seasons, the order and proportion of the universe, all declare the manifold wisdom of [his boundless power]. To him the unseen agencies which hold their course throughout the expanse of space, render the due tribute of praise. To him this terrestrial globe itself, to him the heavens above, and the choirs beyond the vault of heaven, give honor as to their mighty Sovereign; the angelic hosts greet him with ineffable songs of Praise; and the spirits which draw their being from incorporeal light, adore him as their Creator. The everlasting ages which were before this heaven and earth, with other periods beside them, infinite, and antecedent to all visible creation, acknowledge him the sole and supreme Sovereign and Lord.

Lastly, he who is in all, before, and after all, his only begotten, pre-existent Word, the great High Priest of the mighty God, elder than all time and every age, devoted to his Father's glory, first and alone makes intercession with him for the salvation of mankind. Supreme and pre-eminent Ruler of the universe, he shares the glory of his Father's kingdom; for he is that Light, which, transcendent above the universe, encircles the Father's Person, interposing and dividing between the eternal and uncreated Essence and all derived existence; that Light which, streaming from on high, proceeds from that Deity who knows not origin or end, and illumines the super-celestial regions, and all that heaven itself contains, with the radiance

of wisdom bright beyond the splendor of the sun. This is he who holds a supreme dominion over this whole world, who is over and in all things, and pervades all things visible and invisible; the Word of God. From whom and by whom our divinely favored emperor, receiving, as it were a transcript of the Divine sovereignty, directs, in imitation of God himself, the administration of this world's affairs.

Chapter II.

This only begotten Word of God reigns, from ages which had no beginning, to infinite and endless ages, the partner of his Father's kingdom. And [our emperor] ever beloved by him, who derives the source of imperial authority from above, and is strong in the power of his sacred title, has controlled the empire of the world for a long period of years.

Again, that Preserver of the universe orders these heavens and earth, and the celestial kingdom, consistently with his Father's will. Even so our emperor whom he loves, by bringing those whom he rules on earth to the only begotten Word and Saviour renders them fit subjects of his kingdom.

And as he who is the common Saviour of mankind, by his invisible and Divine power as the good shepherd, drives far away from his flock, like savage beasts, those apostate spirits which once flew through the airy tracts above this earth, and fastened on the souls of men[76]; so this his friend, graced by his heavenly favor with victory over all his foes, subdues and chastens the open adversaries of the truth in accordance with the usages of war.

He who is the pre-existent Word, the Preserver of all things, imparts to his disciples the seeds of true wisdom and salvation, and at once enlightens and gives them understanding in the knowledge of his Father's kingdom.

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[76] This is an allusion to what was afterwards known as Vampireism—a belief of unknown antiquity and especially prevalent in various forms in the East. Rydberg (*Magic of the Middle Ages,* p. 207) describes the mediæval form thus: "The vampires, according to the belief of the Middle Ages, are disembodied souls which clothe themselves again in their buried bodies, steal at night into houses, and suck from the nipple of the sleeping all their blood." Similar in nature was that notion of the spirits who sucked away the breath of sleeping persons, which has left its trace in the modern superstition that cats suck away the breath of sleeping children.

Our emperor, his friend, acting as interpreter to the Word of God, aims at recalling the whole human race to the knowledge of God; proclaiming clearly in the ears of all, and declaring with powerful voice the laws of truth and godliness to all who dwell on the earth.

Once more, the universal Saviour opens the heavenly gates of his Father's kingdom to those whose course is thitherward from this world. Our emperor, emulous of his Divine example, having purged his earthly dominion from every stain of impious error, invites each holy and pious worshiper within his imperial mansions, earnestly desiring to save with all its crew that mighty vessel of which he is the appointed pilot. And he alone of all who have wielded the imperial power of Rome, being honored by the Supreme Sovereign with a reign of three decennial periods, now celebrates this festival, not, as his ancestors might have done, in honor of infernal demons, or the apparitions of seducing spirits, or of the fraud and deceitful arts of impious men; but as an act of thanksgiving to him by whom he has thus been honored, and in acknowledgment of the blessings he has received at his hands. He does not, in imitation of ancient usage, defile his imperial mansions with blood and gore, nor propitiate the infernal deities with fire and smoke, and sacrificial offerings; but dedicates to the universal Sovereign a pleasant and acceptable sacrifice, even his own imperial soul, and a mind truly fitted for the service of God.

For this sacrifice alone is grateful to him; and this sacrifice our emperor has learned, with purified mind and thoughts, to present as an offering without the intervention of fire and blood, while his own piety, strengthened by the truthful doctrines with which his soul is stored, he sets forth in magnificent language the praises of God, and imitates his Divine philanthropy by his own imperial acts. Wholly devoted to him, he dedicates himself as a noble offering, a first-fruit of that world, the government of which is intrusted to his charge. This first and greatest sacrifice our emperor first dedicates to God; and then, as a faithful shepherd, he offers, not "famous hecatombs of firstling lambs," but the souls of that flock which is the object of his care, those rational beings whom he leads to the knowledge and pious worship of God.

Chapter III.

And gladly does he accept and welcome this sacrifice, and commend the presenter of so august and noble an offering, by protracting his reign to a lengthened period of years, giving larger proofs of his beneficence in proportion to the emperor's holy services to himself. Accordingly he permits him to celebrate each successive festival during great and general prosperity throughout the empire, advancing one of his sons, at the recurrence of each decennial period, to a share of his own imperial power.

The eldest, who bears his father's name, he received as his partner in the empire about the close of the first decade of his reign; the second, next in point of age, at the second; and the third in like manner at the third decennial period, the occasion of this our present festival. And now that the fourth period has commenced, and the time of his reign is still further prolonged, he desires to extend his imperial authority by calling still more of his kindred to partake his power; and, by the appointment of the Cæsars[77], fulfills the predictions of the holy prophets, according to what they uttered ages before: "And the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom."

And thus the Almighty Sovereign himself accords an increase both of years and of children to our most pious emperor, and renders his sway over the nations of the world still fresh and flourishing, as though it were even now springing up in its earliest vigor. He it is who appoints him this present festival, in that he has made him victorious over every enemy that disturbed his peace; he it is who displays him as an example of true godliness to the human race.

And thus our emperor, like the radiant sun, illuminates the most distant subjects of his empire through the presence of the Cæsars, as with the far piercing rays of his own brightness. To us who occupy the eastern regions he has given a son worthy of himself[78]; a second and a third respectively to other departments of his empire, to be, as it were, brilliant reflectors of the light which proceeds from himself. Once more, having harnessed, as it were, under the self-same yoke the four most noble Cæsars as horses in the imperial chariot, he sits on high and directs their course by the reins of holy harmony and concord; and, himself every where

[77] [Dalmatius and Hanniballianus—*Bag.*]

[78] [Constantius Cæsar—*Bag.*]

present, and observant of every event, thus traverses every region of the world.

And surely monarchy far transcends every other constitution and form of government; for that democratic equality of power, which is its opposite, may rather be described as anarchy and disorder. Hence there is one God, and not two, or three, or more; for to assert a plurality of gods is plainly to deny the being of God at all. There is one Sovereign; and his Word and royal Law is one; a Law not expressed in syllables and words, not written or engraved on tablets, and therefore subject to the ravages of time; but the living and self-subsisting Word, who himself is God, and who administers his Father's kingdom on behalf of all who are after him and subject to his power.

His attendants are the heavenly hosts; the myriads of God's angelic ministers; the super-terrestrial armies, of unnumbered multitude; and those unseen spirits within heaven itself, whose agency is employed in regulating the order of this world. Ruler and chief of all these is the royal Word, acting as Regent of the Supreme Sovereign. To him the names of Captain, and great High Priest, Prophet of the Father, Angel of mighty counsel, Brightness of the Father's light, Only begotten Son, with a thousand other titles, are ascribed in the oracles of the sacred writers. And the Father, having constituted him the living Word, and Law and Wisdom, the fullness of all blessing, has presented this best and greatest gift to all who are the subjects of his sovereignty.

And he himself, who pervades all things, and is every where present, unfolding his Father's bounties to all with unsparing hand, has accorded a specimen of his sovereign power even to his rational creatures of this earth, in that he has provided the mind of man, who is formed after his own image, with Divine faculties, whence it is capable of other virtues also, which flow from the same heavenly source. For he only is wise, who is the only God; he only is essentially good; he only is of mighty power, the Parent of justice, the Father of reason and wisdom, the Fountain of light and life, the Dispenser of truth and virtue; in a word, the Author of empire itself, and of all dominion and power.

Chapter IV.

But whence has man this knowledge, and who has ministered these truths to mortal ears? Or whence has a tongue of flesh the power to speak of things so utterly distinct from fleshly or material substance? Who has gazed on the invisible King, and beheld these perfections in him? The bodily sense may comprehend elements and their combinations, of a nature kindred to its own; but no one yet has boasted to have scanned with corporeal eye that unseen kingdom which governs all things nor has mortal nature yet discerned the beauty of perfect wisdom. Who has beheld the face of righteousness through the medium of flesh? And whence came the idea of legitimate sovereignty and imperial power to man? Whence the thought of absolute dominion to a being composed of flesh and blood? Who declared those ideas which are invisible and undefined, and that incorporeal essence which has no external form, to the mortals of this earth?

Surely there was but one interpreter of these things; the all-pervading Word of God. For he is the author of that rational and intelligent being which exists in man; and, being himself one with his Father's Divine nature, he sheds upon his offspring the out-flowings of his Father's bounty. Hence the natural and untaught powers of thought, which all men, Greeks or Barbarians, alike possess; hence the perception of reason and wisdom, the seeds of integrity and righteousness, the understanding of the arts of life, the knowledge of virtue, the precious name of wisdom, and the noble love of philosophic learning. Hence the knowledge of all that is great and good; hence apprehension of God himself, and a life worthy of his worship; hence the royal authority of man, and his invincible lordship over the creatures of this world.

And when that Word, who is the Parent of rational beings, had impressed a character on the mind of man according to the image and likeness of God, and had made him a royal creature, in that he gave him alone of all earthly creatures capacity to rule and to obey (as well as forethought and foreknowledge even here, concerning the promised hope of his heavenly kingdom, because of which he himself came, and, as the Parent of his children, disdained not to hold converse with mortal men); he continued to cherish the seeds which himself had sown, and renewed his gracious favors from above; holding forth to all the promise of sharing his heavenly kingdom. Accordingly, he called men, and exhorted them to

be ready for their heavenward journey, and to provide themselves with the garment which became their calling. And by an indescribable power he filled the world in every part with his doctrine, expressing by the similitude of an earthly kingdom that heavenly one to which he earnestly invites all mankind, and presents it to them as a worthy object of their hope.

Chapter V.

And in this hope our divinely-favored emperor partakes even in this present life, gifted as he is by God with native virtues, and having received into his soul the out-flowings of his favor. His reason he derives from the great Source of all reason; he is wise, and good, and just, as having fellowship with perfect Wisdom, Goodness, and Righteousness; virtuous, as following the pattern of perfect virtue; valiant, as partaking of heavenly strength.

And truly may he deserve the imperial title, who has formed his soul to royal virtues, according to the standard of that celestial kingdom. But he who is a stranger to these blessings, who denies the Sovereign of the universe, and owns no allegiance to the heavenly Father of spirits; who invests not himself with the virtues which become an emperor, but overlays his soul with moral deformity and baseness; who for royal clemency substitutes the fury of a savage beast; for a generous temper, the incurable venom of malicious wickedness; for prudence, folly; for reason and wisdom, that recklessness which is the most odious of all vices, for from it, as from a spring of bitterness, proceed the most pernicious fruits; such as inveterate profligacy of life, covetousness, murder, impiety and defiance of God; surely one abandoned to such vices as these, however he may be deemed powerful through despotic violence, has no true title to the name of Emperor.

For how should he whose soul is impressed with a thousand absurd images of false deities, be able to exhibit a counterpart of the true and heavenly sovereignty? Or how can he be absolute lord of others, who has subjected himself to the dominion of a thousand cruel masters? a slave of low delights and ungoverned lust, a slave of wrongfully-extorted wealth, of rage and passion, as well as of cowardice and terror; a slave of ruthless demons, and soul-destroying spirits?

Let, then, our emperor, on the testimony of truth itself, be declared

alone worthy of the title; who is dear to the Supreme Sovereign himself; who alone is free, nay, who is truly lord; above the thirst of wealth, superior to sexual desire; victorious even over natural pleasures; controlling, not controlled by, anger and passion. He is indeed an emperor, and bears a title corresponding to his deeds; a Victor in truth, who has gained the victory over those passions which overmaster the rest of men; whose character is formed after the Divine original of the Supreme Sovereign, and whose mind reflects, as in a mirror, the radiance of his virtues. Hence is our emperor perfect in discretion, in goodness, in justice, in courage, in piety, in devotion to God; he truly and only is a philosopher, since he knows himself, and is fully aware that supplies of every blessing are showered on him from a source quite external to himself, even from heaven itself. Declaring the august title of supreme authority by the splendor of his vesture, he alone worthily wears that imperial purple which so well becomes him.

He is indeed an emperor, who calls on and implores in prayer the favor of his heavenly Father night and day, and whose ardent desires are fixed on his celestial kingdom. For he knows that present things, subject as they are to decay and death, flowing on and disappearing like a river's stream, are not worthy to be compared with him who is sovereign of all; therefore it is that he longs for the incorruptible and incorporeal kingdom of God. And this kingdom he trusts he shall obtain, elevating his mind as he does in sublimity of thought above the vault of heaven, and filled with inexpressible longing for the glories which shine there, in comparison with which he deems the precious things of this present world but darkness. For he sees earthly sovereignty to be but a petty and fleeting dominion over a mortal and temporary life, and rates it not much higher than the goatherd's, or shepherd's, or herdsman's power; nay, as more burdensome than theirs, and exercised over more stubborn subjects. The acclamations of the people, and the voice of flattery, he reckons rather troublesome than pleasing, because of the steady constancy of his character, and genuine discipline of his mind.

Again, when he beholds the military service of his subjects, the vast array of his armies, the multitudes of horse and foot, entirely devoted to his command, he feels no astonishment, no pride at the possession of such mighty power; but turns his thoughts inward on himself, and recognizes

the same common nature there. He smiles at his vesture, embroidered with gold and flowers, and at the imperial purple and diadem itself, when he sees the multitude gaze in wonder, like children at a bugbear, on the splendid spectacle. Himself superior to such feelings, he clothes his soul with the knowledge of God, that vesture, the broidery of which is temperance, righteousness, piety, and all other virtues; a vesture such as truly becomes a sovereign.

The wealth which others so much desire, as gold, silver, or precious gems, he regards to be, as they really are, in themselves mere stones and worthless matter, of no avail to preserve or defend from evil. For what power have these things to free from disease, or repel the approach of death? And knowing as he does this truth by personal experience in the use of these things, he regards the splendid attire of his subjects with calm indifference, and smiles at the childishness of those to whom they prove attractive. Lastly, he abstains from all excess in food and wine, and leaves superfluous dainties to gluttons, judging that such indulgences, however suitable to others, are not so to him, and deeply convinced of their pernicious tendency, and their effect in darkening the intellectual powers of the soul.

For all these reasons, our divinely taught and noble-minded emperor, aspiring to higher objects than this life affords, calls upon his heavenly Father as one who longs for his kingdom; exhibits a pious spirit in each action of his life; and finally, as a wise and good instructor, imparts to his subjects the knowledge of him who is the Sovereign Lord of all.

Chapter VI.

And God himself, as an earnest of future reward, assigns to him now as it were tricennial crowns[79] composed of prosperous periods of time; and now, after the revolution of three circles of ten years, he grants permission to all mankind to celebrate this general, nay rather, this universal festival.

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[79] [Alluding (says Valesius) to the crowns of gold which the people of the several provinces were accustomed to present to the Roman emperors on such occasions as the present—*Bag.*] In his prologue to the *Life,* Eusebius calls this very oration a weaving of tricennial crowns (or garlands).

And while those on earth thus rejoice, crowned as it were with the flowers of divine knowledge, surely, we may not unduly suppose that the heavenly choirs, attracted by a natural sympathy, unite their joy with the joy of those on earth; nay, that the Supreme Sovereign himself, as a gracious father, delights in the worship of duteous children, and for this reason is pleased to honor the author and cause of their obedience through a lengthened period of time; and, far from limiting his reign to three decennial circles of years, he extends it to the remotest period, even to far distant eternity.

Now eternity in its whole extent is beyond the power of decline or death; its beginning and extent alike incapable of being scanned by mortal thoughts. Nor will it suffer its central point to be perceived, nor that which is termed its present duration to be grasped by the inquiring mind. Far less, then, the future, or the past; for the one is not, but is already gone; while the future has not yet arrived, and therefore is not. As regards what is termed the present time, it vanishes even as we think or speak, more swiftly than the word itself is uttered. Nor is it possible in any sense to apprehend this time as present; for we must either expect the future, or contemplate the past; the present slips from us, and is gone, even in the act of thought. Eternity, then, in its whole extent, resists and refuses subjection to mortal reason.

But it does not refuse to acknowledge its own Sovereign and Lord, and bears Him as it were mounted on itself, rejoicing in the fair trappings which he bestows. And he himself, not binding it, as the poet imagined, with a golden chain, but as it were controlling its movements by the reins of ineffable wisdom, has adjusted its months and seasons, its times and years, and the alterations of day and night, with perfect harmony, and has thus attached to it limits and measures of various kinds. For eternity, being in its nature direct, and stretching onward into infinity, and receiving its name, eternity, as having an everlasting existence, and being similar in all its parts, or rather having no division or distance, progresses only in a line of direct extension. But God, who has distributed it by intermediate sections, and has divided it, like a far extended line, in many points, has included in it a vast number of portions; and though it is in its nature one, and resembles unity itself, he has attached to it a multiplicity of numbers, and has given it, though formless in itself, an endless variety of forms.

For first of all he framed in it formless matter, as a substance capable of receiving all forms. He next, by the power of the number two, imparted quality to matter, and gave beauty to that which before was void of all grace. Again, by means of the number three, he framed a body compounded of matter and form, and presenting the three dimensions of breadth, and length, and depth. Then, from the doubling of the number two, he devised the quaternion of the elements, earth, water, air, and fire, and ordained them to be everlasting sources for the supply of this universe. Again, the number four produces the number ten. For the aggregate of one, and two, and three, and four, is ten. And three multiplied with ten discovers the period of a month; and twelve successive months complete the course of the sun. Hence the revolutions of years, and changes of the seasons, which give grace, like variety of color in painting, to that eternity which before was formless and devoid of beauty, for the refreshment and delight of those whose lot it is to traverse therein the course of life.

For as the ground is defined by stated distances for those who run in hope of obtaining the prize; and as the road of those who travel on a distant journey is marked by resting-places and measured intervals, that the traveler's courage may not fail at the interminable prospect; even so the Sovereign of the universe, controlling eternity itself within the restraining power of his own wisdom, directs and turns its course as he judges best. The same God, I say, who thus clothes the once undefined eternity as with fair colors and blooming flowers, gladdens the day with the solar rays; and, while he overspreads the night with a covering of darkness, yet causes the glittering stars, as golden spangles, to shine therein. It is he who lights up the brilliancy of the morning star, the changing splendor of the moon, and the glorious companies of the starry host, and has arrayed the expanse of heaven, like some vast mantle, in colors of varied beauty. Again, having created the lofty and profound expanse of air, and caused the world in its length and breadth to feel its cooling influence, he decreed that the air itself should be graced with birds of every kind, and left open this vast ocean of space to be traversed by every creature, visible or invisible, whose course is through the tracts of heaven. In the midst of this atmosphere he poised the earth, as it were its center, and encompassed it with the ocean as with a beautiful azure vesture.

Having ordained this earth to be at once the home, the nurse, and the

mother of all the creatures it contains, and watered it both with rain and water-springs, he caused it to abound in plants and flowers of every species, for the enjoyment of life. And when he had formed man in his own likeness, the noblest of earthly creatures, and dearest to himself, a creature gifted with intellect and knowledge, the child of reason and wisdom, he gave him dominion over all other animals which move and live upon the earth. For man was in truth of all earthly creatures the dearest to God; man, I say, to whom, as an indulgent Father, he has subjected the brute creation; for whom he has made the ocean navigable, and crowned the earth with a profusion of plants of every kind; to whom he has granted reasoning faculties for acquiring all science; under whose control he has placed even the creatures of the deep, and the winged inhabitants of the air; to whom he has permitted the contemplation of celestial objects, and revealed the course and changes of the sun and moon, and the periods of the planets and fixed stars. In short, to man alone of earthly beings has he given commandment to acknowledge him as his heavenly Father, and to celebrate his praises as the Supreme Sovereign of eternity itself.

But the unchangeable course of eternity the Creator has limited by the four seasons of the year, terminating the winter by the approach of spring, and regulating as with an equal balance that season which commences the annual period. Having thus graced the eternal course of time with the varied productions of spring, he added the summer's heat; and then granted as it were a relief of toil by the interval of autumn; and lastly, refreshing and cleansing the season by the showers of winter, he brings it, rendered sleek and glossy, like a noble steed, by these abundant rains, once more to the gates of spring.

As soon, then, as the Supreme Sovereign had thus connected his own eternity by these cords of wisdom with the annual circle, he committed it to the guidance of a mighty Governor, even his only begotten Word, to whom, as the Preserver of all creation, he yielded the reins of universal power. And he, receiving this inheritance as from a beneficent Father, and uniting all things both above and beneath the circumference of heaven in one harmonious whole, directs their uniform course; providing with perfect justice whatever is expedient for his rational creatures on the earth, appointing its allotted limits to human life, and granting to all alike permission to anticipate even here the commencement of a future existence.

For he has taught them that beyond this present world there is a divine and blessed state of being, reserved for those who have been supported here by the hope of heavenly blessings; and that those who have lived a virtuous and godly life will remove hence to a far better habitation; while he adjudges to those who have been guilty and wicked here a place of punishment according to their crimes.

Again, as in the distribution of prizes at the public games, he proclaims various crowns to the victors, and invests each with the rewards of different virtues; but for our good emperor, who is clothed in the very robe of piety, he declares that a higher recompense of his toils is prepared; and, as a prelude to this recompense, permits us now to assemble at this festival, which is composed of perfect numbers, of decades thrice, and triads ten times repeated.

The first of these, the triad, is the offspring of the unit, while the unit is the mother of number itself, and presides over all months, and seasons, and years, and every period of time. It may, indeed, be justly termed the origin, foundation, and principle of all number, and derives its name from its abiding character. For, while every other number is diminished or increased according to the subtraction or addition of others, the unit alone continues fixed and steadfast, abstracted from all multitude and the numbers which are formed from it, and resembling that indivisible essence which is distinct from all things beside, but by virtue of participation in which the nature of all things else subsists.

For the unit is the originator of every number, since all multitude is made up by the composition and addition of units; nor is it possible without the unit to conceive the existence of number at all. But the unit itself is independent of multitude, apart from and superior to all number; forming, indeed, and making all, but receiving no increase from any.

Kindred to this is the triad; equally indivisible and perfect, the first of those sums which are formed of even and uneven numbers. For the perfect number two, receiving the addition of the unit, forms the triad, the first perfect compound number. And the triad, by explaining what equality is, first taught men justice, having itself an equal beginning, and middle, and end. And it is also an image of the mysterious, most holy, and royal Trinity, which, though itself without beginning or origin, yet contains the

germs, the reasons, and causes of the existence of all created things.

Thus the power of the triad may justly be regarded as the first cause of all things. Again, the number ten, which contains the end of all numbers, and terminates them in itself, may truly be called a full and perfect number, as comprehending every species and every measure of numbers, proportions, concords, and harmonies. For example, the units by addition form and are terminated by the number ten; and, having this number as their parent, and as it were the limit of their course, they round this as the goal of their career.

Then they perform a second circuit, and again a third, and a fourth, until the tenth, and thus by ten decades they complete the hundredth number. Returning thence to the first starting point, they again proceed to the number ten, and having ten times completed the hundredth number, again they recede, and perform round the same barriers their protracted course, proceeding from themselves back to themselves again, with revolving motion.

For the unit is the tenth of ten, and ten units make up a decade, which is itself the limit, the settled goal and boundary of units; it is that which terminates the infinity of number; the term and end of units. Again, the triad combined with the decade, and performing a threefold circuit of tens, produces that most natural number, thirty. For as the triad is in respect to units, so is the number thirty in respect to tens.

It is also the constant limit to the course of that luminary which is second to the sun in brightness. For the course of the moon from one conjunction with the sun to the next, completes the period of a month; after which, receiving as it were a second birth, it recommences a new light, and other days, being adorned and honored with thirty units, three decades, and ten triads.

In the same manner is the universal reign of our victorious emperor distinguished by the giver of all good, and now enters on a new sphere of blessing, accomplishing, at present, this tricennalian festival, but reaching forward beyond this to far more distant intervals of time, and cherishing the hope of future blessings in the celestial kingdom; where, not a single sun, but infinite hosts of light surround the Almighty Sovereign, each

surpassing the splendor of the sun, glorious and resplendent with rays derived from the everlasting source of light.

There the soul enjoys its existence, surrounded by fair and unfading blessings; there is a life beyond the reach of sorrow; there the enjoyment of pure and holy pleasures, and a time of unmeasured and endless duration, extending into illimitable space; not defined by intervals of days and months, the revolutions of years, or the recurrence of times and seasons, but commensurate with a life which knows no end. And this life needs not the light of the sun, nor the lustre of the moon or the starry host, since it has the great Luminary himself, even God the Word, the only begotten Son of the Almighty Sovereign.

Hence it is that the mystic and sacred oracles reveal him to be the Sun of righteousness, and the Light which far transcends all light. We believe that he illumines also the thrice-blessed powers of heaven with the rays of righteousness, and the brightness of wisdom, and that he receives truly pious souls, not within the sphere of heaven alone, but into his own bosom, and confirms indeed the assurances which he himself has given.

No mortal eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor can the mind in its vesture of flesh understand what things are prepared for those who have been here adorned with the graces of godliness; blessings which await thee too, most pious emperor, to whom alone since the world began has the Almighty Sovereign of the universe granted power to purify the course of human life; to whom also he has revealed his own symbol of salvation, whereby he overcame the power of death, and triumphed over every enemy. And this victorious trophy, the scourge of evil spirits, thou hast arrayed against the errors of idol worship, and hast obtained the victory not only over all thy impious and savage foes, but over equally barbarous adversaries, the evil spirits themselves.

Chapter VII.

For whereas we are composed of two distinct natures, I mean of body and spirit, of which the one is visible to all, the other invisible, against both these natures two kinds of barbarous and savage enemies, the one invisibly, the other openly, are constantly arrayed. The one oppose our

bodies with bodily force; the other with incorporeal assaults besiege the naked soul itself.

Again, the visible barbarians, like the wild nomad tribes, no better than savage beasts, assail the nations of civilized men, ravage their country, and enslave their cities, rushing on those who inhabit them like ruthless wolves of the desert, and destroying all who fall under their power. But those unseen foes, more cruel far than barbarians, I mean the soul-destroying demons whose course is through the regions of the air, had succeeded, through the snares of vile polytheism, in enslaving the entire human race, insomuch that they no longer recognized the true God, but wandered in the mazes of atheistic error. For they procured, I know not whence, gods who never anywhere existed, and set him aside who is the only and the true God, as though he were not.

Accordingly, the generation of bodies was esteemed by them a deity, and so the opposite principle to this, their dissolution and destruction, was also deified. The first, as the author of generative power, was honored with rites under the name of Venus[80]; the second, as rich, and mighty in dominion over the human race, received the names of Pluto, and Death. For men in those ages, knowing no other than naturally generated life, declared the cause and origin of that life to be divine; and again, believing in no existence after death, they proclaimed Death himself a universal conqueror and a mighty god. Hence, unconscious of responsibility, as destined to be annihilated by death, they lived a life unworthy of the name, in the practice of actions deserving a thousand deaths. No thought of God could enter their minds, no expectation of Divine judgment, no recollection of, no reflection on, their spiritual existence; acknowledging one dread superior, Death, and persuaded that the dissolution of their bodies by his power was final annihilation, they bestowed on Death the title of a mighty, a wealthy god, and hence the name of Pluto. Thus, then, Death became to them a god; nor only so, but whatever else they accounted precious in comparison with death, whatever contributed to the luxuries of life.

Hence animal pleasure became to them a god; nutrition, and its production, a god; the fruit of trees, a god; drunken riot, a god; carnal desire and pleasure, a god. Hence the mysteries of Ceres and Proserpine,

[80] Or Aphrodite.

the rape of the latter, and her subsequent restoration, by Pluto; hence the orgies of Bacchus, and Hercules overcome by drunkenness as by a mightier god; hence the adulterous rites of Cupid and of Venus; hence Jupiter himself infatuated with the love of women, and of Ganymede; hence the licentious legends of deities abandoned to effeminacy and pleasure.

Such were the weapons of superstition whereby these cruel barbarians and enemies of the Supreme God afflicted, and indeed entirely subdued, the human race; erecting everywhere the monuments of impiety, and rearing in every corner the shrines and temples of their false religion.

Nay, so far were the ruling powers of those times enslaved by the force of error, as to appease their gods with the blood of their own countrymen and kindred; to whet their swords against those who stood forward to defend the truth; to maintain a ruthless war and raise unholy hands, not against foreign or barbarian foes, but against men bound to them by the ties of family and affection, against brethren, and kinsmen, and dearest friends, who had resolved, in the practice of virtue and true piety, to honor and worship God.

Such was the spirit of madness with which these princes sacrificed to their demon deities men consecrated to the service of the King of kings. On the other hand their victims, as noble martyrs in the cause of true godliness, resolved to welcome a glorious death in preference to life itself, and utterly despised these cruelties. Strengthened, as soldiers of God, with patient fortitude, they mocked at death in all its forms; at fire, and sword, and the torment of crucifixion; at exposure to savage beasts, and drowning in the depths of the sea; at the cutting off and searing of limbs, the digging out of eyes, the mutilation of the whole body; lastly, at famine, the labor of the mines, and captivity; nay, all these sufferings they counted better than any earthly good or pleasure, for the love they bore their heavenly King. In like manner women also evinced a spirit of constancy and courage not inferior to that of men.

Some endured the same conflicts with them, and obtained a like reward of their virtue; others, forcibly carried off to be the victims of violence and pollution, welcomed death rather than dishonor; while many, very many more, endured not even to hear the same threats wherewith they were assailed by the provincial governors, but boldly sustained every variety of

torture, and sentence of death in every form. Thus did these valiant soldiers of the Almighty Sovereign maintain the conflict with steadfast fortitude of soul against the hostile forces of polytheism; and thus did these enemies of God and adversaries of man's salvation, more cruel far than the ferocious savage, delight in libations of human blood; thus did their ministers drain as it were the cup of unrighteous slaughter in honor of the demons whom they served, and prepare for them this dread and impious banquet, to the ruin of the human race.

In these sad circumstances, what course should the God and King of these afflicted ones pursue? Could he be careless of the safety of his dearest friends or abandon his servants in this great extremity? Surely none could deem him a wary pilot, who, without an effort to save his fellow-mariners should suffer his vessel to sink with all her crew; surely no general could be found so reckless as to yield his own allies, without resistance, to the mercy of the foe; nor can a faithful shepherd regard with unconcern the straying of a single sheep from his flock, but will rather leave the rest in safety, and dare all things for the wanderer's sake, even, if need be, to contend with savage beasts.

The zeal, however, of the great Sovereign of all was for no unconscious sheep; his care was exercised for his own faithful host, for those who sustained the battle for his sake; whose conflicts in the cause of godliness he himself approved, and honored those who had returned to his presence with the prize of victory which he only can bestow, uniting them to the angelic choirs. Others he still preserved on earth, to communicate the living seeds of piety to future generations; to be at once eye-witnesses of his vengeance on the ungodly, and narrators of the events.

After this he outstretched his arm in judgment on the adversaries, and utterly destroyed them with the stroke of Divine wrath, compelling them, how reluctant soever to confess with their own lips and recant their wickedness, but raising from the ground and exalting gloriously those who had long been oppressed and disclaimed by all.

Such were the dealings of the Supreme Sovereign, who ordained an invincible champion to be the minister of his heaven-sent vengeance (for our emperor's surpassing piety delights in the title of Servant of God), and him he has proved victorious over all that opposed him, having raised him

up, an individual against many foes. For they were indeed numberless, being the friends of many evil spirits (though in reality they were nothing, and hence are now no more); but our emperor is one, appointed by, and the representative of, the one Almighty Sovereign. And they, in the very spirit of impiety, destroyed the righteous with cruel slaughter; but he, in imitation of his Saviour, and knowing only how to save men's lives, has spared and instructed in godliness the impious themselves.

And so, as truly worthy the name of Victor, he has subdued the twofold race of barbarians; soothing the savage tribes of men by prudent embassies, compelling them to know and acknowledge their superiors, and reclaiming them from a lawless and brutal life to the governance of reason and humanity; at the same time that he proved by the facts themselves that the fierce and ruthless race of unseen spirits had long ago been vanquished by a higher power. For he who is the preserver of the universe had punished these invisible spirits by an invisible judgment; and our emperor, as the delegate of the Supreme Sovereign, has followed up the victory, bearing away the spoils of those who have long since died and mouldered into dust, and distributing the plunder with lavish hand among the soldiers of his victorious Lord[81].

Chapter VIII.

For as soon as he understood that the ignorant multitudes were inspired with a vain and childish dread of these bugbears of error, wrought in gold and silver, he judged it right to remove these also, like stumbling-stones thrown in the path of men walking in the dark, and henceforward to open a royal road, plain and unobstructed, to all.

Having formed this resolution, he considered that no soldiers or military force of any sort was needed for the repression of the evil; a few of his own friends sufficed for this service, and these he sent by a simple expression of his will to visit each several province.

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[81] [That is, stripping the images of those whose temples he destroyed, and apportioning the spoils among his Christian followers: See the next chapter, which is mostly a transcript of the 54th and 55th chapters of the Third Book of the *Life of Constantine*—*Bag.*]

Accordingly, sustained by confidence in the emperor's piety and their own personal devotion to God, they passed through the midst of numberless tribes and nations, abolishing this ancient system of error in every city and country. They ordered the priests themselves, in the midst of general laughter and scorn, to bring their gods from their dark recesses to the light of day. They then stripped them of their ornaments, and exhibited to the gaze of all the unsightly reality which had been hidden beneath a painted exterior; and lastly, whatever part of the material appeared to be of value they scraped off and melted in the fire to prove its worth, after which they secured and set apart whatever they judged needful for their purposes, leaving to the superstitious worshipers what was altogether useless, as a memorial of their shame.

Meanwhile our admirable prince was himself engaged in a work similar to that we have described. For at the same time that these costly images of the dead were stripped, as we have said, of their precious materials, he also attacked those composed of brass; causing those to be dragged from their places with ropes, and, as it were, carried away captive, whom the dotage of mythology had esteemed as gods. The next care of our august emperor was to kindle, as it were, a brilliant torch, by the light of which he directed his imperial gaze around, to see if any hidden vestiges of error might yet exist.

And as the keen-sighted eagle in its heavenward flight is able to descry from its lofty height the most distant objects on the earth; so did he, whilst residing in the imperial palace of his own fair city, discover, as from a watch-tower, a hidden and fatal snare of souls in the province of Phœnicia. This was a grove and temple, not situated in the midst of any city, or in any public place, as for splendor of effect is generally the case, but apart from the beaten and frequented road, on part of the summit of Mount Lebanon, and dedicated to the foul demon known by the name of Venus.

It was a school of wickedness for all the abandoned votaries of impurity and such as destroyed their bodies with effeminacy. Here men undeserving the name forgot the dignity of their sex, and propitiated the demon by their effeminate conduct; here too unlawful commerce of women, and adulterous intercourse, with other horrible and infamous practices, were perpetrated in this temple as in a place beyond the scope and restraint of

law. Meantime these evils remained unchecked by the presence of any observer, since no one of fair character ventured to visit such scenes.

These proceedings, however, could not escape the vigilance of our august emperor, who, having himself inspected them with characteristic forethought, and judging that such a temple was unfit for the light of heaven, gave orders that the building with its offerings should be utterly destroyed. Accordingly, in obedience to the imperial edict, these engines of an impure superstition were immediately abolished, and the hand of military force was made instrumental in purging the place. And now those who had heretofore lived without restraint, learned, through the imperial threat of punishment, to practice self-control.

Thus did our emperor tear the mask from this system of delusive wickedness, and expose it to the public gaze, at the same time proclaiming openly his Saviour's name to all. No advocate appeared; neither god nor demon, prophet nor diviner, could lend his aid to the detected authors of the imposture. For the souls of men were no longer enveloped in thick darkness; but enlightened by the rays of true godliness, they deplored the ignorance and pitied the blindness of their forefathers, rejoicing at the same time in their own deliverance from such fatal error.

Thus speedily, according to the counsel of the mighty God, and through our emperor's agency, was every enemy, whether visible or unseen, utterly removed; and henceforward peace, the happy nurse of youth, extended her reign throughout the world. Wars were no more, for the gods were not; no more did warfare in country or town, no more did the effusion of human blood, distress mankind, as heretofore, when demon-worship and the madness of idolatry prevailed.

Chapter IX.

And now we may well compare the present with former things, and review these happy changes in contrast with the evils that are past, and mark the elaborate care with which in ancient times porches and sacred precincts, groves and temples, were prepared in every city for these false deities, and how their shrines were enriched with abundant offerings.

The sovereign rulers of those days had indeed a high regard for the

worship of the gods. The nations also and people subject to their power honored them with images both in the country and in every city, nay, even in their houses and secret chambers, according to the religious practice of their fathers. The fruit, however, of this devotion, far different from the peaceful concord which now meets our view, appeared in war, in battles, and seditions, which harassed them throughout their lives, and deluged their countries with blood and civil slaughter.

Again, the objects of their worship could hold out to these sovereigns with artful flattery the promise of prophecies, and oracles, and the knowledge of futurity; yet could they not predict their own destruction, nor forewarn themselves of the coming ruin; and surely this was the greatest and most convincing proof of their imposture.

Not one of those whose words once were heard with awe and wonder, had announced the glorious advent of the Saviour of mankind, or that new revelation of divine knowledge which he came to give. Not Pythius himself, nor any of those mighty gods, could apprehend the prospect of their approaching desolation; nor could their oracles point at him who was to be their conqueror and destroyer.

What prophet or diviner could foretell that their rites would vanish at the presence of a new Deity in the world, and that the knowledge and worship of the Almighty Sovereign should be freely given to all mankind? Which of them foreknew the august and pious reign of our victorious emperor, or his triumphant conquests everywhere over the false demons, or the overthrow of their high places?

Which of the heroes has announced the melting down and conversion of the lifeless statues from their useless forms to the necessary uses of men? Which of the gods have yet had power to speak of their own images thus melted and contemptuously reduced to fragments?

Where were the protecting powers, that they should not interpose to save their sacred memorials, thus destroyed by man? Where, I ask, are those who once maintained the strife of war, yet now behold their conquerors abiding securely in the profoundest peace? And where are they who upheld themselves in a blind and foolish confidence, and trusted in these vanities as gods; but who, in the very height of their superstitious error, and

while maintaining an implacable war with the champions of the truth, perished by a fate proportioned to their crimes?

Where is the giant race whose arms were turned against heaven itself; the hissings of those serpents whose tongues were pointed with impious words against the Almighty King? These adversaries of the Lord of all, confident in the aid of a multitude of gods, advanced to the attack with a powerful array of military force, preceded by certain images of the dead, and lifeless statues, as their defense. On the other side our emperor, secure in the armor of godliness, opposed to the numbers of the enemy the salutary and life-giving Sign, as at the same time a terror to the foe, and a protection against every harm; and returned victorious at once over the enemy and the demons whom they served. And then, with thanksgiving and praise, the tokens of a grateful spirit, to the Author of his victory, he proclaimed this triumphant Sign, by monuments as well as words, to all mankind, erecting it as a mighty trophy against every enemy in the midst of the imperial city, and expressly enjoining on all to acknowledge this imperishable symbol of salvation as the safeguard of the power of Rome and of the empire of the world.

Such were the instructions which he gave to his subjects generally; but especially to his soldiers, whom he admonished to repose their confidence, not in their weapons, or armor, or bodily strength, but to acknowledge the Supreme God as the giver of every good, and of victory itself.

Thus did the emperor himself, strange and incredible as the fact may seem, become the instructor of his army in their religious exercises, and teach them to offer pious prayers in accordance with the divine ordinances, uplifting their hands towards heaven, and raising their mental vision higher still to the King of heaven, on whom they should call as the Author of victory, their preserver, guardian, and helper. He commanded too, that one day should be regarded as a special occasion for religious worship; I mean that which is truly the first and chief of all, the day of our Lord and Saviour; that day the name of which is connected with light, and life, and immortality, and every good.

Prescribing the same pious conduct to himself, he honored his Saviour in the chambers of his palace, performing his devotions according to the Divine commands, and storing his mind with instruction through the

hearing of the sacred word. The entire care of his household was intrusted to ministers devoted to the service of God, and distinguished by gravity of life and every other virtue; while his trusty body-guards, strong in affection and fidelity to his person, found in their emperor an instructor in the practice of a godly life.

Again, the honor with which he regards the victorious Sign is founded on his actual experience of its divine efficacy. Before this the hosts of his enemies have disappeared; by this the powers of the unseen spirits have been turned to flight; through this the proud boastings of God's adversaries have come to nought, and the tongues of the profane and blasphemous been put to silence. By this Sign the Barbarian tribes were vanquished; through this the rites of superstitious fraud received a just rebuke; by this our emperor, discharging as it were a sacred debt, has performed the crowning good of all, by erecting triumphant memorials of its value in all parts of the world, raising temples and churches on a scale of royal costliness, and commanding all to unite in constructing the sacred houses of prayer.

Accordingly these signal proofs of our emperor's magnificence forthwith appeared in the provinces and cities of the empire, and soon shone conspicuously in every country; convincing memorials of the rebuke and overthrow of those impious tyrants who but a little while before had madly dared to fight against God, and, raging like savage dogs, had vented on unconscious buildings that fury which they were unable to level against him; had thrown to the ground and upturned the very foundations of the houses of prayer, causing them to present the appearance of a city captured and abandoned to the enemy. Such was the exhibition of that wicked spirit whereby they sought as it were to assail God himself, but soon experienced the result of their own madness and folly. But a little time elapsed, when a single blast of the storm of Heaven's displeasure swept them utterly away, leaving neither kindred, nor offspring, nor memorial of their existence among men; for all, numerous as they were, disappeared as in a moment beneath the stroke of Divine vengeance.

Such, then, was the fate which awaited these furious adversaries of God; but he who, armed with the salutary Trophy, had alone opposed them (nay rather, not alone, but aided by the presence and the power of him

who is the only Sovereign), has replaced the ruined edifices on a greater scale, and made the second far superior to the first. For example, besides erecting various churches to the honor of God in the city which bears his name, and adorning the Bithynian capital with another on the greatest and most splendid scale, he has distinguished the principal cities of the other provinces by structures of a similar kind.

Above all, he has selected two places in the eastern division of the empire, the one in Palestine (since from thence the life-giving stream has flowed as from a fountain for the blessing of all nations), the other in that metropolis of the East which derives its name from that of Antiochus; in which, as the head of that portion of the empire, he has consecrated to the service of God a church of unparalleled size and beauty. The entire building is encompassed by an enclosure of great extent, within which the church itself rises to a vast elevation, of an octagonal form, surrounded by many chambers and courts on every side, and decorated with ornaments of the richest kind.

Such was his work here. Again, in the province of Palestine, in that city which was once the seat of Hebrew sovereignty, on the very site of the Lord's sepulchre, he has raised a church of noble dimensions, and adorned a temple sacred to the salutary Cross with rich and lavish magnificence, honoring that everlasting monument, and the trophies of the Saviour's victory over the power of death, with a splendor which no language can describe.

In the same country he discovered three places venerable as the localities of three sacred caves; and these also he adorned with costly structures, paying a fitting tribute of reverence to the scene of the first manifestation of the Saviour's presence; while at the second cavern he hallowed the remembrance of his final ascension from the mountain top; and celebrated his mighty conflict, and the victory which crowned it, at the third. All these places our emperor thus adorned in the hope of proclaiming the symbol of redemption to all mankind; that Cross which has indeed repaid his pious zeal; through which his house and throne alike have prospered, his reign has been confirmed for a lengthened series of years, and the rewards of virtue bestowed on his noble sons, his kindred, and their descendants.

And surely it is a mighty evidence of the power of that God whom he

serves, that he has held the balances of justice with an equal hand, and has apportioned to each party their due reward. With regard to the destroyers of the houses of prayer, the penalty of their impious conduct followed hard upon them; forthwith were they swept away, and left neither race, nor house, nor family behind. On the other hand, he whose pious devotion to his Lord is conspicuous in his every act, who raises royal temples to his honor, and proclaims his name to his subjects by sacred offerings throughout the world, he, I say, has deservedly experienced him to be the preserver and defender of his imperial house and race. Thus clearly have the dealings of God been manifested, and this through the sacred efficacy of the salutary Sign.

Chapter X.

Much might indeed be said of this salutary Sign, by those who are skilled in the mysteries of our Divine religion. For it is in very truth the symbol of salvation, wondrous to speak of, more wondrous still to conceive; the appearance of which on earth has thrown the fictions of all false religion from the beginning into the deepest shade, has buried superstitious error in darkness and oblivion, and has revealed to all that spiritual light which enlightens the souls of men, even the knowledge of the only true God.

Hence the universal change for the better, which leads men to spurn their lifeless idols, to trample under foot the lawless rites of their demon deities, and laugh to scorn the time-honored follies of their fathers. Hence, too, the establishment in every place of those schools of sacred learning, wherein men are taught the precepts of saving truth, and dread no more those objects of creation which are seen by the natural eye, nor direct a gaze of wonder at the sun, the moon, or stars; but acknowledge him who is above all these, that invisible Being who is the Creator of them all, and learn to worship him alone.

Such are the blessings resulting to mankind from this great and wondrous Sign, by virtue of which the evils which once existed are now no more, and virtues heretofore unknown shine everywhere resplendent with the light of true godliness.

Discourses, and precepts, and exhortations to a virtuous and holy life, are proclaimed in the ears of all nations. Nay, the emperor himself proclaims them; and it is indeed a marvel that this mighty prince, raising his voice in the hearing of all the world, like an interpreter of the Almighty Sovereign's will, invites his subjects in every country to the knowledge of the true God.

No more, as in former times, is the babbling of impious men heard in the imperial palace; but priests and pious worshipers of God together celebrate his majesty with royal hymns of praise. The name of the one Supreme Ruler of the universe is proclaimed to all; the gospel of glad tidings connects the human race with its Almighty King, declaring the grace and love of the heavenly Father to his children on the earth.

His praise is everywhere sung in triumphant strains; the voice of mortal man is blended with the harmony of the angelic choirs in heaven; and the reasoning soul employs the body which invests it as an instrument for sounding forth a fitting tribute of praise and adoration to his name. The nations of the East and the West are instructed at the same moment in his precepts; the people of the Northern and Southern regions unite with one accord, under the influence of the same principles and laws, in the pursuit of a godly life, in praising the one Supreme God, in acknowledging his only begotten Son their Saviour as the source of every blessing, and our emperor as the one ruler on the earth, together with his pious sons.

He himself, as a skillful pilot, sits on high at the helm of state, and directs the vessel with unerring course, conducting his people as it were with favoring breeze to a secure and tranquil haven. Meanwhile God himself, the great Sovereign, extends the right hand of his power from above for his protection, giving him victory over every foe, and establishing his empire by a lengthened period of years; and he will bestow on him yet higher blessings, and confirm in every deed the truth of his own promises. But on these we may not at present dwell; but must await the change to a better world; for it is not given to mortal eyes or ears of flesh, fully to apprehend the things of God.

Chapter XI.

And now, victorious and mighty Constantine, in this discourse, whose noble argument is the glory of the Almighty King, let me lay before thee some of the mysteries of his sacred truth; not as presuming to instruct thee, who art thyself taught of God; nor to disclose to thee those secret wonders which he himself, not through the agency of man, but through our common Saviour, and the frequent light of his Divine presence has long since revealed and unfolded to thy view; but in the hope of leading the unlearned to the light, and displaying before those who know them not the causes and motives of thy pious deeds.

True it is that thy noble efforts for the daily worship and honor of the Supreme God throughout the habitable world, are the theme of universal praise. But those records of gratitude to thy Saviour and Preserver which thou hast dedicated in our own province of Palestine, and in that city from which as from a fountain-head the Saviour Word has issued forth to all mankind; and again, the hallowed edifices and consecrated temples which thou hast raised as trophies of his victory over death; and those lofty and noble structures, imperial monuments of an imperial spirit, which thou hast erected in honor of the everlasting memory of the Saviour's tomb; the cause, I say, of these things is not equally obvious to all.

Those, indeed, who are enlightened in heavenly knowledge by the power of the Divine Spirit, well understand the cause, and justly admire and bless thee for that counsel and resolution which Heaven itself inspired. On the other hand the ignorant and spiritually blind regard these designs with open mockery and scorn, and deem it a strange and unworthy thing indeed that so mighty a prince should waste his zeal on the graves and monuments of the dead.

"Were it not better," such a one might say, "to cherish those rites which are hallowed by ancient usage; to seek the favor of those gods and heroes whose worship is observed in every province; instead of rejecting and disclaiming them, because subject to the calamities incident to man? Surely they may claim equal honors with him who himself has suffered; or, if they are to be rejected, as not exempt from the sorrows of humanity, the same award would justly be pronounced respecting him." Thus, with important and contracted brow, might he give utterance in pompous language to his self-imagined wisdom.

Filled with compassion for this ignorance, the gracious Word of our most beneficent Father freely invites, not such a one alone, but all who are in the path of error, to receive instruction in Divine knowledge; and has ordained the means of such instruction throughout the world, in every country and village, in cultivated and desert lands alike, and in every city; and, as a gracious Saviour and Physician of the soul, calls on the Greek and the Barbarian, the wise and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, the servant and his master, the subject and his lord, the ungodly, the profane, the ignorant, the evil-doer, the blasphemer, alike to draw near, and hasten to receive his heavenly cure. And thus in time past had he clearly announced to all the pardon of former transgressions, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And again, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." And he adds the reason, saying, "For they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." And again, "I desire not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent."

Hence it is only for those who are themselves instructed in Divine things and understand the motives of that zeal of which these works are the result, to appreciate the more than human impulse by which our emperor was guided, to admire his piety toward God, and to believe his care for the memorial of our Saviour's resurrection to be a desire imparted from above, and truly inspired by that Sovereign, to be whose faithful servant and minister for good is his proudest boast.

In full persuasion, then, of thy approval, most mighty emperor, I desire at this present time to proclaim to all the reasons and motives of thy pious works. I desire to stand as the interpreter of thy designs, to explain the counsels of a soul devoted to the love of God. I propose to teach all men, what all should know who care to understand the principles on which our Saviour God employs his power, the reasons for which he who was the pre-existent Controller of all things at length descended to us from heaven; the reasons for which he assumed our nature, and submitted even to the power of death. I shall declare the causes of that immortal life which followed, and of his resurrection from the dead. Once more, I shall adduce convincing proofs and arguments, for the sake of those who yet need such testimony.

And now let me commence my appointed task. Those who transfer the

worship due to that God who formed and rules the world to the works of his hand; who hold the sun and moon, or other parts of this material system, nay, the elements themselves, earth, water, air, and fire, in equal honor with the Creator of them all; who give the name of gods to things which never would have had existence, or even name, except as obedient to that Word of God who made the world; such persons in my judgment resemble those who overlook the master hand which gives its magnificence to a royal palace; and, while lost in wonder at its roofs and walls, the paintings of varied beauty and coloring which adorn them, and its gilded ceilings and sculptures, ascribe to them the praise of that skill which belongs to the artist whose work they are; whereas they should assign the cause of their wonder, not to these visible objects, but to the architect himself, and confess that the proofs of skill are indeed manifest, but that he alone is the possessor of that skill who has made them what they are.

Again, well might we liken those to children, who should admire the seven-stringed lyre, and disregard him who invented or has power to use it; or those who forget the valiant warrior, and adorn his spear and shield with the chaplet of victory; or, lastly, those who hold the squares and streets, the public buildings, temples, and gymnasia of a great and royal city in equal honor with its founder; forgetting that their admiration is due, not to lifeless stones, but to him whose wisdom planned and executed these mighty works.

Not less absurd is it for those who regard this universe with the natural eye to ascribe its origin to the sun, or moon, or any other heavenly body. Rather let them confess that these are themselves the works of a higher wisdom, remember the Maker and Framer of them all, and render to him the praise and honor above all created objects. Nay rather, inspired by the sight of these very objects, let them address themselves with full purpose of heart to glorify and worship him who is now invisible to mortal eye, but perceived by the clear and unclouded vision of the soul, the supremely sovereign Word of God. To take the instance of the human body; no one has yet conferred the attribute of wisdom on the eyes, or head, the hands, or feet, or other members, far less on the outward clothing, of a wise and learned man; no one terms the philosopher's household furniture and utensils, wise; but every rational person admires that invisible and secret power, the mind of the man himself.

How much more, then, is our admiration due, not to the visible mechanism of the universe, material as it is, and formed of the selfsame elements; but to that invisible Word who has moulded and arranged it all, who is the only-begotten Son of God, and whom the Maker of all things, who far transcends all being, has begotten of himself, and appointed Lord and Governor of this universe?

For since it was impossible that perishable bodies, or the rational spirits which he had created, should approach the Supreme God, by reason of their immeasurable distance from his perfections, for he is unbegotten, above and beyond all creation, ineffable, inaccessible, unapproachable, dwelling, as his holy word assures us, in the light which none can enter; but they were created from nothing, and are infinitely far removed from his unbegotten Essence; well has the all-gracious and Almighty God interposed as it were an intermediate Power between himself and them, even the Divine omnipotence of his only-begotten Word. And this Power, which is in perfect nearness and intimacy of union, with the Father which abides in him, and shares his secret counsels, has yet condescended, in fullness of grace, as it were to conform itself to those who are so far removed from the supreme majesty of God. How else, consistently with his own holiness could he who is far above and beyond all things unite himself to corruptible and corporeal matter? Accordingly the Divine Word, thus connecting himself with this universe, and receiving into his hands the reins, as it were, of the world, turns and directs it as a skillful charioteer according to his own will and pleasure.

The proof of these assertions is evident. For supposing that those component parts of the world which we call elements, as earth, water, air, and fire, the nature of which is manifestly without intelligence, are self-existent; and if they have one common essence, which they who are skilled in natural science call the great receptacle, mother, and nurse of all things; and if this itself be utterly devoid of shape and figure, of soul and reason; whence shall we say it has obtained its present form and beauty? To what shall we ascribe the distinction of the elements, or the union of things contrary in their very nature? Who has commanded the liquid water to sustain the heavy element of earth? Who has turned back the waters from their downward course, and carried them aloft in clouds? Who has bound the force of fire, and caused it to lie latent in wood, and to combine with

substances most contrary to itself? Who has mingled the cold air with heat, and thus reconciled the enmity of opposing principles? Who has devised the continuous succession of the human race, and given it as it were an endless term of duration? Who has moulded the male and female form, adapted their mutual relations with perfect harmony, and given one common principle of production to every living creature? Who changes the character of the fluid and corruptible seed, which in itself is void of reason, and gives it its prolific power? Who is at this moment working these and ten thousand effects more wonderful than these, nay, surpassing all wonder, and with invisible influence is daily and hourly perpetuating the production of them all?

Surely the wonder-working and truly omnipotent Word of God may well be deemed the efficient cause of all these things; that Word who, diffusing himself through all creation, pervading height and depth with incorporeal energy, and embracing the length and breadth of the universe within his mighty grasp, has compacted and reduced to order this entire system, from whose unreasoned and formless matter he has framed for himself an instrument of perfect harmony, the nicely balanced chords and notes of which he touches with all-wise and unerring skill. He it is who governs the sun, and moon, and the other luminaries of heaven by inexplicable laws, and directs their motions for the service of the universal whole.

It is this Word of God who has stooped to the earth on which we live, and created the manifold species of animals, and the fair varieties of the vegetable world. It is this same Word who has penetrated the recesses of the deep, has given their being to the finny race, and produced the countless forms of life which there exist. It is he who fashions the burden of the womb, and informs it in nature's laboratory with the principle of life. By him the fluid and heavy moisture is raised on high, and then, sweetened by a purifying change, descends in measured quantities to the earth, and at stated seasons in more profuse supply.

Like a skillful husbandman, he fully irrigates the land, tempers the moist and dry in just proportion, diversifying the whole with brilliant flowers, with aspects of varied beauty, with pleasant fragrance, with alternating varieties of fruits, and countless gratifications for the taste of

men. But why do I dare essay a hopeless task, to recount the mighty works of the Word of God, and describe an energy which surpasses mortal thought? By some, indeed, he has been termed the Nature of the universe, by others, the World-Soul, by others, Fate. Others again have declared him to be the Most High God himself, strangely confounding things most widely different; bringing down to this earth, uniting to a corruptible and material body, and assigning to that supreme and unbegotten Power who is Lord of all an intermediate place between irrational animals and rational mortals on the one hand, and immortal beings on the other.

Chapter XII.

On the other hand, the sacred doctrine teaches that he who is the supreme Source of good, and Cause of all things, is beyond all comprehension, and therefore inexpressible by word, or speech, or name; surpassing the power, not of language only, but of thought itself. Uncircumscribed by place, or body; neither in heaven, nor in ethereal space, nor in any other part of the universe; but entirely independent of all things else, he pervades the depths of unexplored and secret wisdom. The sacred oracles teach us to acknowledge him as the only true God, apart from all corporeal essence, distinct from all subordinate ministration. Hence it is said that all things are from him, but not through him.

And he himself dwelling as Sovereign in secret and undiscovered regions of unapproachable light, ordains and disposes all things by the single power of his own will. At his will whatever is, exists; without that will, it cannot be. And his will is in every case for good, since he is essentially Goodness itself. But he through whom are all things, even God the Word, proceeding in an ineffable manner from the Father above, as from an everlasting and exhaustless fountain, flows onward like a river with a full and abundant stream of power for the preservation of the universal whole.

And now let us select an illustration from our own experience. The invisible and undiscovered mind within us, the essential nature of which no one has ever known, sits as a monarch in the seclusion of his secret chambers, and alone resolves on our course of action. From this proceeds the only-begotten word from its father's bosom, begotten in a manner and

by a power inexplicable to us; and is the first messenger of its father's thoughts, declares his secret counsels, and, conveying itself to the ears of others, accomplishes his designs.

And thus the advantage of this faculty is enjoyed by all; yet no one has ever yet beheld that invisible and hidden mind, which is the parent of the word itself. In the same manner, or rather in a manner which far surpasses all likeness or comparison, the perfect Word of the Supreme God, as the only-begotten Son of the Father (not consisting in the power of utterance, nor comprehended in syllables and parts of speech, nor conveyed by a voice which vibrates on the air; but being himself the living and effectual Word of the most High, and subsisting personally as the Power and Wisdom of God), proceeds from his Father's Deity and kingdom. Thus, being the perfect Offspring of a perfect Father, and the common Preserver of all things, he diffuses himself with living power throughout creation, and pours from his own fullness abundant supplies of reason, wisdom, light, and every other blessing, not only on objects nearest to himself, but on those most remote, whether in earth, or sea, or any other sphere of being.

To all these he appoints with perfect equity their limits, places, laws, and inheritance, allotting to each their suited portion according to his sovereign will. To some he assigns the super-terrestrial regions, to others heaven itself as their habitation; others he places in ethereal space, others in air, and others still on earth. He it is who transfers mankind from hence to another sphere, impartially reviews their conduct here, and bestows a recompense according to the life and habits of each. By him provision is made for the life and food, not of rational creatures only, but also of the brute creation, for the service of men;

and while to the latter he grants the enjoyment of a perishable and fleeting term of existence, the former he invites to a share in the possession of immortal life. Thus universal is the agency of the Word of God; everywhere present, and pervading all things by the power of his intelligence, he looks upward to his Father, and governs this lower creation, inferior to and consequent upon himself, in accordance with his will, as the common Preserver of all things.

Intermediate, as it were, and attracting the created to the uncreated

Essence, this Word of God exists as an unbroken bond between the two, uniting things most widely different by an inseparable tie. He is the Providence which rules the universe; the guardian and director of the whole; he is the Power and Wisdom of God the only-begotten God, the Word begotten of God himself. For "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that hath been made"; as we learn from the words of the sacred writer. Through his vivifying power all nature grows and flourishes, refreshed by his continual showers, and invested with a vigor and beauty ever new.

Guiding the reigns of the universe, he holds its onward course in conformity to the Father's will and moves, as it were, the helm of this mighty ship. This glorious Agent, the only-begotten Son of the Supreme God, begotten by the Father as his perfect Offspring, the Father has given to this world as the highest of all goods; infusing his word, as spirit into a lifeless body, into unconscious nature; imparting light and energy to that which in itself was a rude, inanimate, and formless mass, through the Divine power. Him therefore it is ours to acknowledge and regard as everywhere present, and giving life to matter and the elements of nature; in him we see Light, even the spiritual offspring of inexpressible Light; one indeed in essence, as being the Son of one Father; but possessing in himself many and varied powers.

The world is indeed divided into many parts; yet let us not therefore suppose that there are many independent Agents; nor, though creation's works be manifold, let us thence assume the existence of many gods. How grievous the error of those childish and infatuated advocates of polytheistic worship, who deify the constituent parts of the universe, and divide into many that system which is only one!

Such conduct resembles theirs who should abstract the eyes of an individual man, and term them the man himself, and the ears, another man, and so the head; or again, by an effort of thought should separate the neck, the breast and shoulders, the feet and hands, or other members, nay, the very powers of sense, and thus pronounce an individual to be a multitude of men. Such folly must surely be rewarded with contempt by men of sense. Yet such is he who from the component parts of a single world

can devise for himself a multitude of gods, or even deem that world which is the work of a Creator, and consists of many parts, to be itself a god; not knowing that the Divine Nature can in no sense be divisible into parts; since, if compounded, it must be so through the agency of another power; and that which is so compounded can never be Divine. How indeed could it be so, if composed of unequal and dissimilar, and hence of worse and better elements? Simple, indivisible, uncompounded, the Divine Nature exists at an infinite elevation above the visible constitution of this world.

And hence we are assured by the clear testimony of the sacred Herald, that the Word of God, who is before all things, must be the sole Preserver of all intelligent beings; while God, who is above all, and the Author of the generation of the Word, being himself the Cause of all things, is rightly called the Father of the Word, as of his only-begotten Son, himself acknowledging no superior Cause. God, therefore, himself is One, and from him proceeds the one Only-Begotten Word, the omnipresent Preserver of all things. And as the many-stringed lyre is composed of different chords, both sharp and flat, some slightly, others tensely strained, and others intermediate between the two extremes, yet all attuned according to the rules of harmonic art; even so this material world, compounded as it is of many elements, containing opposite and antagonist principles, as moisture and dryness, cold and heat, yet blended into one harmonious whole, may justly be termed a mighty instrument framed by the hand of God; an instrument on which the Divine Word, himself not composed of parts or opposing principles, but indivisible and uncompounded, performs with perfect skill, and produces a melody at once accordant with the will of his Father the Supreme Lord of all, and glorious to himself. Again, as there are manifold external and internal parts and members comprised in a single body, yet one invisible soul, one undivided and incorporeal mind pervades the whole; so is it in this creation, which, consisting of many parts, yet is but one; and so the One mighty, yea, Almighty Word of God, pervading all things, and diffusing himself with undeviating energy throughout this universe, is the Cause of all things that exist therein.

Survey the compass of this visible world. Seest thou not how the same heaven contains within itself the countless courses and companies of the stars? Again, the sun is one, and yet eclipses many, nay all other luminaries,

by the surpassing glory of his rays. Even so, as the Father himself is One, his Word is also One, the perfect Son of that perfect Father. Should any one object because they are not more, as well might he complain that there are not many suns, or moons, or worlds, and a thousand things beside; like the madman, who would fain subvert the fair and perfect course of Nature herself. As in the visible, so also in the spiritual world; in the one the same sun diffuses his light throughout this material earth; in the other the One Almighty Word of God illumines all things with invisible and secret power.

Again, there is in man one spirit, and one faculty of reason, which yet is the active cause of numberless effects. The same mind, instructed in many things, will essay to cultivate the earth, to build and guide a ship, and construct houses; nay, the one mind and reason of man is capable of acquiring knowledge in a thousand forms; the same mind shall understand geometry and astronomy, and discourse on the rules of grammar, and rhetoric, and the healing art. Nor will it excel in science only, but in practice too; and yet no one has ever supposed the existence of many minds in one human form, nor expressed his wonder at a plurality of being in man, because he is thus capable of varied knowledge.

Suppose one were to find a shapeless mass of clay, to mould it with his hands, and give it the form of a living creature; the head in one figure, the hands and feet in another, the eyes and cheeks in a third, and so to fashion the ears, the mouth and nose, the breast and shoulders, according to the rules of the plastic art. The result, indeed, is a variety of figure, of parts and members in the one body; yet must we not suppose it the work of many hands, but ascribe it entirely to the skill of a single artist, and yield the tribute of our praise to him who by the energy of a single mind has framed it all. The same is true of the universe itself, which is one, though consisting of many parts; yet surely we need not suppose many creative powers, nor invent a plurality of gods. Our duty is to adore the all-wise and all-perfect agency of him who is indeed the Power and the Wisdom of God, whose undivided force and energy pervades and penetrates the universe, creating and giving life to all things, and furnishing to all, collectively and severally, those manifold supplies of which he is himself the source.

Even so one and the same impression of the solar rays illumines the air at

once, gives light to the eyes, warmth to the touch, fertility to the earth, and growth to plants. The same luminary constitutes the course of time, governs the motions of the stars, performs the circuit of the heavens, imparts beauty to the earth, and displays the power of God to all: and all this he performs by the sole and unaided force of his own nature. In like manner fire has the property of refining gold, and fusing lead, of dissolving wax, of parching clay, and consuming wood; producing these varied effects by one and the same burning power.

So also the Supreme Word of God, pervading all things, everywhere existent, everywhere present in heaven and earth, governs and directs the visible and invisible creation, the sun, the heaven, and the universe itself, with an energy inexplicable in its nature, irresistible in its effects. From him, as from an everlasting fountain, the sun, the moon, and stars receive their light; and he forever rules that heaven which he has framed as the fitting emblem of his own greatness. The angelic and spiritual powers, the incorporeal and intelligent beings which exist beyond the sphere of heaven and earth, are filled by him with light and life, with wisdom and virtue, with all that is great and good, from his own peculiar treasures. Once more, with one and the same creative skill, he ceases not to furnish the elements with substance, to regulate the union and combinations, the forms and figures, and the innumerable qualities of organized bodies; preserving the varied distinctions of animal and vegetable life, of the rational and the brute creation; and supplying all things to all with equal power: thus proving himself the Author, not indeed of the seven-stringed lyre, but of that system of perfect harmony which is the workmanship of the One world-creating Word.

Chapter XIII.

And now let us proceed to explain the reasons for which this mighty Word of God descended to dwell with men. Our ignorant and foolish race, incapable of comprehending him who is the Lord of heaven and earth, proceeding from his Father's Deity as from the supreme fountain, ever present throughout the world, and evincing by the clearest proofs his providential care for the interests of man; have ascribed the adorable title of Deity to the sun, and moon, the heaven and the stars of heaven. Nor did

they stop here, but deified the earth itself, its products, and the various substances by which animal life is sustained, and devised images of Ceres, of Proserpine, of Bacchus[82], and many such as these.

Nay, they shrank not from giving the name of gods to the very conceptions of their own minds, and the speech by which those conceptions are expressed; calling the mind itself Minerva, and language Mercury[83], and affixing the names of Mnemosyne and the Muses to those faculties by means of which science is acquired. Nor was even this enough; advancing still more rapidly in the career of impiety and folly, they deified their own evil passions, which it behooved them to regard with aversion, or restrain by the principles of self-control. Their very lust and passion and impure disease of soul, the members of the body which tempt to obscenity, and even the very uncontrol in shameful pleasure, they described under the titles of Cupid, Priapus, Venus[84], and other kindred terms.

Nor did they stop even here. Degrading their thoughts of God to this corporeal and mortal life, they deified their fellow-men, conferring the names of gods and heroes on those who had experienced the common lot of all, and vainly imagining that the Divine and imperishable Essence could frequent the tombs and monuments of the dead. Nay, more than this; they paid divine honors to animals of various species, and to the most noxious reptiles; they felled trees, and excavated rocks; they provided themselves with brass, and iron, and other metals, of which they fashioned resemblances of the male and female human form, of beasts, and creeping things; and these they made the objects of their worship.

Nor did this suffice. To the evil spirits themselves which lurked within their statues, or lay concealed in secret and dark recesses, eager to drink their libations, and inhale the odor of their sacrifices, they ascribed the same divine honors. Once more, they endeavored to secure the familiar aid of these spirits, and the unseen powers which move through the tracts of air, by charms of forbidden magic, and the compulsion of unhallowed songs and incantations. Again, different nations have adopted different persons as objects of their worship. The Greeks have rendered to Bacchus,

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[82] Of Demeter, of Cora, of Dionysius.

[83] Athene…Hermes.

[84] Eros, Priapus, Aphrodite.

Hercules, Æsculapius, Apollo, and others who were mortal men, the titles of gods and heroes. The Egyptians have deified Horus and Isis, Osiris, and other mortals such as these. And thus they who boast of the wondrous skill whereby they have discovered geometry, astronomy, and the science of number, know not, wise as they are in their own conceit, nor understand how to estimate the measure of the power of God, or calculate his exceeding greatness above the nature of irrational and mortal beings.

Hence they shrank not from applying the name of gods to the most hideous of the brute creation, to venomous reptiles and savage beasts. The Phœnicians deified Melcatharus, Usorus, and others; mere mortals, and with little claim to honor; the Arabians, Dusaris and Obodas; the Getæ, Zamolxis; the Cicilians, Mopsus; and the Thebans, Amphiaraus; in short, each nation has adopted its own peculiar deities, differing in no respect from their fellow-mortals, being simply and truly men. Again, the Egyptians with one consent, the Phœnicians, the Greeks, nay, every nation beneath the sun, have united in worshiping the very parts and elements of the world, and even the produce of the ground itself. And, which is most surprising, though acknowledging the adulterous, unnatural, and licentious crimes of their deities, they have not only filled every city, and village, and district with temples, shrines, and statues in their honor, but have followed their evil example to the ruin of their own souls.

We hear of gods and the sons of gods described by them as heroes and good genii, titles entirely opposed to truth, honors utterly at variance with the qualifies they are intended to exalt. It is as if one who desired to point out the sun and the luminaries of heaven, instead of directing his gaze thitherward, should grope with his hands on the ground, and search for the celestial powers in the mud and mire. Even so mankind, deceived by their own folly and the craft of evil spirits, have believed that the Divine and spiritual Essence which is far above heaven and earth could be compatible with the birth, the affections, and death, of mortal bodies here below. To such a pitch of madness did they proceed, as to sacrifice the dearest objects of their affection to their gods, regardless of all natural ties, and urged by frenzied feeling to slay their only and best beloved children.

For what can be a greater proof of madness, than to offer human sacrifice, to pollute every city, and even their own houses, with kindred

blood? Do not the Greeks themselves attest this, and is not all history filled with records of the same impiety? The Phœnicians devoted their best beloved and only children as an annual sacrifice to Saturn. The Rhodians, on the sixth day of the month Metageitnion, offered human victims to the same god. At Salamis, a man was pursued in the temple of Minerva Agraulis and Diomede, compelled to run thrice round the altar, afterwards pierced with a lance by the priest, and consumed as a burnt offering on the blazing pile. In Egypt, human sacrifice was most abundant. At Heliopolis three victims were daily offered to Juno, for whom king Amoses, impressed with the atrocity of the practice, commanded the substitution of an equal number of waxen figures. In Chios, and again in Tenedos, a man was slain and offered up to Omadian Bacchus. At Sparta they immolated human beings to Mars. In Crete they did likewise, offering human sacrifices to Saturn. In Laodicea of Syria a virgin was yearly slain in honor of Minerva, for whom a hart is now the substitute. The Libyans and Carthaginians appeased their gods with human victims. The Dumateni of Arabia buried a boy annually beneath the altar. History informs us that the Greeks without exception, the Thracians also, and Scythians, were accustomed to human sacrifice before they marched forth to battle. The Athenians record the immolation of the virgin children of Leus, and the daughter of Erechtheus. Who knows not that at this day a human victim is offered in Rome itself at the festival of Jupiter Latiaris?

And these facts are confirmed by the testimony of the most approved philosophers. Diodorus, the epitomizer of libraries, affirms that two hundred of the noblest youths were sacrificed to Saturn by the Libyan people, and that three hundred more were voluntarily offered by their own parents. Dionysius, the compiler of Roman history, expressly says that Jupiter and Apollo demanded human sacrifices of the so-called Aborigines, in Italy. He relates that on this demand they offered a proportion of all their produce to the gods; but that, because of their refusal to slay human victims, they became involved in manifold calamities, from which they could obtain no release until they had decimated themselves, a sacrifice of life which proved the desolation of their country. Such and so great were the evils which of old afflicted the whole human race.

Nor was this the full extent of their misery; they groaned beneath the pressure of other evils equally numerous and irremediable. All nations,

whether civilized or barbarous, throughout the world, as if actuated by a demoniac frenzy, were infected with sedition as with some fierce and terrible disease; insomuch that the human family was irreconcilably divided against itself; the great system of society was distracted and torn asunder; and in every corner of the earth men stood opposed to each other, and strove with fierce contention on questions of law and government.

Nay, more than this; with passions aroused to fury, they engaged in mutual conflicts, so frequent that their lives were passed as it were in uninterrupted warfare. None could undertake a journey except as prepared to encounter an enemy; in the very country and villages the rustics girded on the sword, provided themselves with armor rather than with the implements of rural labor, and deemed it noble exploit to plunder and enslave any who belonged to a neighboring state.

Nay, more than this; from the fables they had themselves devised respecting their own deities, they deduced occasions for a vile and abandoned life, and wrought the ruin of body and soul by licentiousness of every kind. Not content with this, they even overstepped the bounds which nature had defined, and together committed incredible and nameless crimes, "men with men (in the words of the sacred writer) working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due."

Nor did they stop even here; but perverted their natural thoughts of God, and denied that the course of this world was directed by his providential care, ascribing the existence and constitution of all things to the blind operation of chance, or the necessity of fate.

Once more; believing that soul and body were alike dissolved by death, they led a brutish life, unworthy of the name; careless of the nature or existence of the soul, they dreaded not the tribunal of Divine justice, expected no reward of virtue, nor thought of chastisement as the penalty of an evil life.

Hence it was that whole nations, a prey to wickedness in all its forms, were wasted by the effects of their own brutality; some living in the practice of most vile and lawless incest with mothers, others with sisters, and others again corrupting their own daughters. Some were found who slew their

confiding guests; others who fed on human flesh; some strangled, and then feasted on, their aged men; others threw them alive to dogs. The time would fail me were I to attempt to describe the multifarious symptoms of the inveterate malady which had asserted its dominion over the whole human race.

Such, and numberless others like these, were the prevailing evils, on account of which the gracious Word of God, full of compassion for his human flock, had long since, by the ministry of his prophets, and earlier still, as well as later, by that of men distinguished by pious devotion to God, invited those thus desperately afflicted to their own cure; and had, by means of laws, exhortations, and doctrines of every kind, proclaimed to man the principles and elements of true godliness. But when for mankind, distracted and torn as I have said, not indeed by wolves and savage beasts, but by ruthless and soul-destroying spirits of evil, human power no longer sufficed, but a help was needed superior to that of man; then it was that the Word of God, obedient to his all-gracious Father's will, at length himself appeared, and most willingly made his abode amongst us.

The causes of his advent I have already described, induced by which he condescended to the society of man; not in his wonted form and manner, for he is incorporeal, and present everywhere throughout the world, proving by his agency both in heaven and earth the greatness of his almighty power, but in a character new and hitherto unknown. Assuming a mortal body, he deigned to associate and converse with men; desiring, through the medium of their own likeness, to save our mortal race.

Chapter XIV.

And now let us explain the cause for which the incorporeal Word of God assumed this mortal body as a medium of intercourse with man. How, indeed, else than in human form could that Divine and impalpable, that immaterial and invisible Essence manifest itself to those who sought for God in created and earthly objects, unable or unwilling otherwise to discern the Author and Maker of all things?

As a fitting means, therefore, of communication with mankind, he assumed a mortal body, as that with which they were themselves familiar; for

like, it is proverbially said, loves its like. To those, then, whose affections were engaged by visible objects, who looked for gods in statues and lifeless images, who imagined the Deity to consist in material and corporeal substance, nay, who conferred on men the title of divinity, the Word of God presented himself in this form.

Hence he procured for himself this body as a thrice-hallowed temple, a sensible habitation of an intellectual power; a noble and most holy form, of far higher worth than any lifeless statue. The material and senseless image, fashioned by base mechanic hands, of brass or iron, of gold or ivory, wood or stone, may be a fitting abode for evil spirits; but that Divine form, wrought by the power of heavenly wisdom, was possessed of life and spiritual being; a form animated by every excellence, the dwelling-place of the Word of God, a holy temple of the holy God.

Thus the indwelling Word conversed with and was known to men, as kindred with themselves; yet yielded not to passions such as theirs, nor owned, as the natural soul, subjection to the body. He parted not with aught of his intrinsic greatness, nor changed his proper Deity. For as the all-pervading radiance of the sun receives no stain from contact with dead and impure bodies; much less can the incorporeal power of the Word of God be injured in its essential purity, or part with any of its greatness, from spiritual contact with a human body.

Thus, I say, did our common Saviour prove himself the benefactor and preserver of all, displaying his wisdom through the instrumentality of his human nature, even as a musician uses the lyre to evince his skill. The Grecian myth tells us that Orpheus had power to charm ferocious beasts, and tame their savage spirit, by striking the chords of his instrument with a master hand; and this story is celebrated by the Greeks, and generally believed, that an unconscious instrument could subdue the untamed brute, and draw the trees from their places, in obedience to its melodious power. But he who is the author of perfect harmony, the all-wise Word of God, desiring to apply every remedy to the manifold diseases of the souls of men, employed that human nature which is the workmanship of his own wisdom, as an instrument by the melodious strains of which he soothed, not indeed the brute creation, but savages endued with reason; healing each furious temper, each fierce and angry passion of the soul, both

in civilized and barbarous nations, by the remedial power of his Divine doctrine. Like a physician of perfect skill, he met the diseases of their souls who sought for God in nature and in bodies, by a fitting and kindred remedy, and showed them God in human form.

And then, with no less care for the body than the soul, he presented before the eyes of men wonders and signs, as proofs of his Divine power, at the same time instilling into their ears of flesh the doctrines which he himself uttered with a corporeal tongue. In short, he performed all his works through the medium of that body which he had assumed for the sake of those who else were incapable of apprehending his Divine nature.

In all this he was the servant of his Father's will, himself remaining still the same as when with the Father; unchanged in essence, unimpaired in nature, unfettered by the trammels of mortal flesh, nor hindered by his abode in a human body from being elsewhere present.

Nay, at the very time of his intercourse with men, he was pervading all things, was with and in the Father, and even then was caring for all things both in heaven and earth. Nor was he precluded, as we are, from being present everywhere, or from the continued exercise of his Divine power. He gave of his own to man, but received nothing in return; he imparted of his Divine power to mortality, but derived no accession from mortality itself.

Hence his human birth to him brought no defilement; nor could his impassible Essence suffer at the dissolution of his mortal body. For let us suppose a lyre to receive an accidental injury, or its chord to be broken; it does not follow that the performer on it suffers; nor, if a wise man's body undergo punishment, can we fairly assert that his wisdom, or the soul within him, are maimed or burned.

Far less can we affirm that the inherent power of the Word sustained any detriment from his bodily passion, any more than, as in the instance we have already used, the solar rays which are shot from heaven to earth contract defilement, though in contact with mire and pollution of every kind. We may, indeed, assert that these things partake of the radiance of the light, but not that the light is contaminated, or the sun defiled, by this contact with other bodies.

And indeed these things are themselves not contrary to nature; but the Saviour, the incorporeal Word of God, being Life and spiritual Light itself, whatever he touches with Divine and incorporeal power must of necessity become endued with the intelligence of light and life. Thus, if he touch a body, it becomes enlightened and sanctified, is at once delivered from all disease, infirmity, and suffering, and that which before was lacking is supplied by a portion of his fullness.

And such was the tenor of his life on earth; now proving the sympathies of his human nature with our own, and now revealing himself as the Word of God; wondrous and mighty in his works as God; foretelling the events of the far distant future; declaring in every act, by signs, and wonders, and supernatural powers, that Word whose presence was so little known; and finally, by his Divine teaching, inviting the souls of men to prepare for those mansions which are above the heavens.

Chapter XV.

What now remains, but to account for those which are the crowning facts of all; I mean his death, so far and widely known, the manner of his passion, and the mighty miracle of his resurrection after death; and then to establish the truth of these events by the clearest testimonies?

For the reasons detailed above he used the instrumentality of a mortal body, as a figure becoming his Divine majesty, and like a mighty sovereign employed it as his interpreter in his intercourse with men, performing all things consistently with his own Divine power. Supposing, then, at the end of his sojourn among men, he had by any other means suddenly withdrawn himself from their sight, and, secretly removing that interpreter of himself, the form which he had assumed, had hastened to flee from death, and afterwards by his own act had consigned his mortal body to corruption and dissolution; doubtless in such a case he would have been deemed a mere phantom by all. Nor would he have acted in a manner worthy of himself, had he who is Life, the Word, and the Power of God, abandoned this interpreter of himself to corruption and death.

Nor, again, would his warfare with the spirits of evil have received its consummation by conflict with the power of death. The place of his

retirement must have remained unknown; nor would his existence have been believed by those who had not seen him for themselves. No proof would have been given that he was superior to death nor would he have delivered mortality from the law of its natural infirmity. His name had never been heard throughout the world nor could he have inspired his disciples with contempt of death, or encouraged those who embraced his doctrine to hope for the enjoyment of a future life with God. Nor would he have fulfilled the assurances of his own promise, nor have accomplished the predictions of the prophets concerning himself. Nor would he have undergone the last conflict of all; for this was to be the struggle with the power of death.

For all these reasons, then, and inasmuch as it was necessary that the mortal body which had rendered such service to the Divine Word should meet with an end worthy its sacred occupant, the manner of his death was ordained accordingly. For since but two alternatives remained; either to consign his body entirely to corruption, and so to bring the scene of life to a dishonored close, or else to prove himself victorious over death, and render mortality immortal by the act of Divine power; the former of these alternatives would have contravened his own promise. For as it is not the property of fire to cool, nor of light to darken, no more is it compatible with life, to deprive of life, or with Divine intelligence, to act in a manner contrary to reason. For how would it be consistent, with reason, that he who had promised life to others, should permit his own body, the form which he had chosen, to perish beneath the power of corruption? That he who had inspired his disciples with hopes of immortality, should yield this exponent of his Divine counsels to be destroyed by death?

The second alternative was therefore needful; I mean, that he should assert his dominion over the power of death. But how? should this be a furtive and secret act, or openly performed and in the sight of all? So mighty an achievement, had it remained unknown and unrevealed, must have failed of its effect as regards the interests of men; whereas the same event, if openly declared and understood, would, from its wondrous character, redound to the common benefit of all. With reason, therefore, since it was needful to prove his body victorious over death, and that not secretly but before the eyes of men, he shrank not from the trial, for this indeed would have argued fear, and a sense of inferiority to the power of death, but

maintained that conflict with the enemy which has rendered mortality immortal; a conflict undertaken for the life, the immortality, the salvation of all.

Suppose one desired to show us that a vessel could resist the force of fire; how could he better prove the fact than by casting it into the furnace and thence withdrawing it entire and unconsumed? Even thus the Word of God who is the source of life to all, desiring to prove the triumph of that body over death which he had assumed for man's salvation, and to make this body partake his own life and immortality, pursued a course consistent with this object. Leaving his body for a little while, and delivering it up to death in proof of its mortal nature, he soon redeemed it from death, in vindication of that Divine power whereby he has manifested the immortality which he has promised to be utterly beyond the sphere of death.

The reason of this is clear. It was needful that his disciples should receive ocular proof of the certainty of that resurrection on which he had taught them to rest their hopes as a motive for rising superior to the fear of death. It was indeed most needful that they who purposed to pursue a life of godliness should receive a clear impression of this essential truth; more needful still for those who were destined to declare his name in all the world, and to communicate to mankind that knowledge of God which he had before ordained for all nations.

For such the strongest conviction of a future life was necessary, that they might be able with fearless and unshrinking zeal to maintain the conflict with Gentile and polytheistic error; a conflict the dangers of which they would never have been prepared to meet, except as habituated to the contempt of death. Accordingly, in arming his disciples against the power of this last enemy, he delivered not his doctrines in mere verbal precepts, nor attempted to prove the soul's immortality, by persuasive and probable arguments; but displayed to them in his own person a real victory over death.

Such was the first and greatest reason of our Saviour's conflict with the power of death, whereby he proved to his disciples the nothingness of that which is the terror of all mankind, and afforded a visible evidence of the reality of that life which he had promised; presenting as it were a first-fruit

of our common hope, of future life and immortality in the presence of God.

The second cause of his resurrection was, that the Divine power might be manifested which dwelt in his mortal body. Mankind had heretofore conferred Divine honors on men who had yielded to the power of death, and had given the titles of gods and heroes to mortals like themselves. For this reason, therefore, the Word of God evinced his gracious character, and proved to man his own superiority over death, recalling his mortal body to a second life, displaying an immortal triumph over death in the eyes of all, and teaching them to acknowledge the Author of such a victory to be the only true God, even in death itself.

I may allege yet a third cause of the Saviour's death. He was the victim offered to the Supreme Sovereign of the universe for the whole human race; a victim consecrated for the need of the human race, and for the overthrow of the errors of demon worship. For as soon as the one holy and mighty sacrifice, the sacred body of our Saviour, had been slain for man, to be as a ransom for all nations, heretofore involved in the guilt of impious superstition, thenceforward the power of impure and unholy spirits was utterly abolished, and every earth-born and delusive error was at once weakened and destroyed.

Thus, then, this salutary victim taken from among themselves, I mean the mortal body of the Word, was offered on behalf of the common race of men. This was that sacrifice delivered up to death, of which the sacred oracles speak: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And again, as follows: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is dumb." They declare also the cause, saying: "He bears our sins, and is pained for us; yet we accounted him to be in trouble, and in suffering, and in affliction. But he was wounded on account of our sins, and bruised because of our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his bruises we were healed. All we as sheep have gone astray; every one has gone astray in this way; and the Lord gave him up for our sins."

Such were the causes which led to the offering of the human body of the Word of God. But forasmuch as he was the great high priest, consecrated to the Supreme Lord and King, and therefore more than a

victim, the Word, the Power, and the Wisdom of God; he soon recalled his body from the grasp of death, presented it to his Father as the first-fruit of our common salvation, and raised this trophy, a proof at once of his victory over death and Satan, and of the abolition of human sacrifices, for the blessing of all mankind.

Chapter XVI.

And now the time is come for us to proceed to the demonstration of these things; if indeed such truths require demonstration, and if the aid of testimony be needful to confirm the certainty of palpable facts. Such testimony, however, shall be here given; and let it be received with an attentive and gracious ear.

Of old the nations of the earth, the entire human race, were variously distributed into provincial, national, and local governments, subject to kingdoms and principalities of many kinds. The consequences of this variety were war and strife, depopulation and captivity, which raged in country and city with unceasing fury. Hence, too, the countless subjects of history, adulteries, and rapes of women; hence the woes of Troy, and the ancient tragedies, so known among all peoples.

The origin of these may justly be ascribed to the delusion of polytheistic error. But when that instrument of our redemption, the thrice holy body of Christ, which proved itself superior to all Satanic fraud, and free from evil both in word and deed, was raised, at once for the abolition of ancient evils, and in token of his victory over the powers of darkness; the energy of these evil spirits was at once destroyed. The manifold forms of government, the tyrannies and republics, the siege of cities, and devastation of countries caused thereby, were now no more, and one God was proclaimed to all mankind.

At the same time one universal power, the Roman empire, arose and flourished, while the enduring and implacable hatred of nation against nation was now removed; and as the knowledge of one God, and one way of religion and salvation, even the doctrine of Christ, was made known to all mankind; so at the self-same period, the entire dominion of the Roman empire being vested in a single sovereign, profound peace reigned

throughout the world. And thus, by the express appointment of the same God, two roots of blessing, the Roman empire, and the doctrine of Christian piety, sprang up together for the benefit of men.

For before this time the various countries of the world, as Syria, Asia, Macedonia, Egypt, and Arabia, had been severally subject to different rulers. The Jewish people, again, had established their dominion in the land of Palestine. And these nations, in every village, city, and district, actuated by some insane spirit, were engaged in incessant and murderous war and conflict. But two mighty powers, starting from the same point, the Roman empire, which henceforth was swayed by a single sovereign, and the Christian religion, subdued and reconciled these contending elements.

Our Saviour's mighty power destroyed at once the many governments and the many gods of the powers of darkness, and proclaimed to all men, both rude and civilized, to the extremities of the earth, the sole sovereignty of God himself. Meantime the Roman empire, the causes of multiplied governments being thus removed, effected an easy conquest of those which yet remained; its object being to unite all nations in one harmonious whole; an object in great measure already secured, and destined to be still more perfectly attained, even to the final conquest of the ends of the habitable world, by means of the salutary doctrine, and through the aid of that Divine power which facilitates and smooths its way.

And surely this must appear a wondrous fact to those who will examine the question in the love of truth, and desire not to cavil at these blessings. The falsehood of demon superstition was convicted; the inveterate strife and mutual hatred of the nations was removed; at the same time One God, and the knowledge of that God, were proclaimed to all; one universal empire prevailed; and the whole human race, subdued by the controlling power of peace and concord, received one another as brethren, and responded to the feelings of their common nature. Hence, as children of one God and Father, and owning true religion as their common mother, they saluted and welcomed each other with words of peace. Thus the whole world appeared like one well-ordered and united family; each one might journey unhindered as far as and whithersoever he pleased; men might securely travel from West to East, and from East to West, as to their own native country; in short, the ancient oracles and predictions of the

prophets were fulfilled, more numerous than we can at present cite, and those especially which speak as follows concerning the saving Word. "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." And again, "In his days shall righteousness spring up; and abundance of peace." "And they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into sickles; and nation shall not take up sword against nation, neither shall they learn to war any more."

These words, predicted ages before in the Hebrew tongue, have received in our own day a visible fulfillment, by which the testimonies of the ancient oracles are clearly confirmed. And now, if thou still desire more ample proof, receive it, not in words, but from the facts themselves. Open the eyes of thine understanding; expand the gates of thought; pause awhile, and consider; inquire of thyself as though thou wert another, and thus diligently examine the nature of the case. What king or prince in any age of the world, what philosopher, legislator, or prophet, in civilized or barbarous lands, has attained so great a height of excellence, I say not after death, but while living still, and full of mighty power, as to fill the ears and tongues of all mankind with the praises of his name? Surely none save our only Saviour has done this, when, after his victory over death, he spoke the word to his followers, and fulfilled it by the event, saying to them, "Go ye, and make disciples of all nations in my name." He it was who gave the distinct assurance, that his gospel must be preached in all the world for a testimony to all nations, and immediately verified his word; for within a little time the world itself was filled with his doctrine.

How, then, will those who caviled at the commencement of my speech be able to reply to this? For surely the force of ocular testimony is superior to any verbal argument. Who else than he, with an invisible and yet potent hand, has driven from human society like savage beasts that ever noxious and destructive tribe of evil spirits who of old had made all nations their prey, and by the motions of their images had practiced many a delusion among men? Who else, beside our Saviour, by the invocation of his name, and by unfeigned prayer addressed through him to the Supreme God, has given power to banish from the world the remnant of those wicked spirits to those who with genuine and sincere obedience pursue the course of life and conduct which he has himself prescribed? Who else but our Saviour has taught his followers to offer those bloodless and reasonable sacrifices which

are performed by prayer and the secret worship of God?

Hence is it that throughout the habitable world altars are erected, and churches dedicated, wherein these spiritual and rational sacrifices are offered as a sacred service by every nation to the One Supreme God. Once more, who but he, with invisible and secret power, has suppressed and utterly abolished those bloody sacrifices which were offered with fire and smoke, as well as the cruel and senseless immolation of human victims; a fact which is attested by the heathen historians themselves? For it was not till after the publication of the Saviour's Divine doctrine, about the time of Hadrian's reign, that the practice of human sacrifice was universally abandoned.

Such and so manifest are the proofs of our Saviour's power and energy after death. Who then can be found of spirit so obdurate as to withhold his assent to the truth, and refuse to acknowledge his life to be Divine? Such deeds as I have described are done by the living, not the dead; and visible acts are to us as evidence of those which we cannot see. It is as it were an event of yesterday that an impious and godless race disturbed and confounded the peace of human society, and possessed mighty power. But these, as soon as life departed, lay prostrate on the earth, worthless as dung, breathless, motionless, bereft of speech, and have left neither fame nor memorial behind. For such is the condition of the dead; and he who no longer lives is nothing; and how can he who is nothing be capable of any act? But how shall his existence be called in question, whose active power and energy are greater than in those who are still alive? And though he be invisible to the natural eye, yet the discerning faculty is not in outward sense. We do not comprehend the rules of art, or the theories of science, by bodily sensation; nor has any eye yet discerned the mind of man. Far less, then, the power of God; and in such cases our judgment is formed from apparent results.

Even thus are we bound to judge of our Saviour's invisible power, and decide by its manifest effects whether we shall acknowledge the mighty operations which he is even now carrying on to be the works of a living agent; or whether they shall be ascribed to one who has no existence; or, lastly, whether the inquiry be not absurd and inconsistent in itself. For with what reason can we assert the existence of one who is not? Since all allow

that that which has no existence is devoid of that power, and energy, and action, for these are characteristics of the living, but the contrary is characteristic of the dead.

Chapter XVII.

And now the time is come for us to consider the works of our Saviour in our own age, and to contemplate the living operations of the living God. For how shall we describe these mighty works save as living proofs of the power of a living agent, who truly enjoys the life of God? If any one inquire the nature of these works, let him now attend.

But recently a class of persons, impelled by furious zeal, and backed by equal power and military force, evinced their enmity against God, by destroying his churches, and overthrowing from their foundations the buildings dedicated to his worship. In short, in every way they directed their attacks against the unseen God, and assailed him with a thousand shafts of impious words. But he who is invisible avenged himself with an invisible hand.

By the single fiat of his will his enemies were utterly destroyed, they who a little while before had been flourishing in great prosperity, exalted by their fellow men as worthy of divine honor, and blessed with a continued period of power and glory, so long as they had maintained peace and amity with him whom they afterwards opposed. As soon, however, as they dared openly to resist his will, and to set their gods in array against him whom we adore; immediately, according to the will and power of that God against whom their arms were raised, they all received the judgment due to their audacious deeds. Constrained to yield and flee before his power, together they acknowledged his Divine nature, and hastened to reverse the measures which they had before essayed.

Our Saviour, therefore, without delay erected trophies of this victory everywhere, and once more adorned the world with holy temples and consecrated houses of prayer; in every city and village, nay, throughout all countries, and even in barbaric wilds, ordaining the erection of churches and sacred buildings to the honor of the Supreme God and Lord of all. Hence it is that these hallowed edifices are deemed worthy to bear his

name, and receive not their appellation from men, but from the Lord himself, from which circumstances they are called churches (or houses of the Lord).

And now let him who will stand forth and tell us who, after so complete a desolation, has restored these sacred buildings from foundation to roof? Who, when all hope appeared extinct, has caused them to rise on a nobler scale than heretofore? And well may it claim our wonder, that this renovation was not subsequent to the death of those adversaries of God, but whilst the destroyers of these edifices were still alive; so that the recantation of their evil deeds came in their own words and edicts. And this they did, not in the sunshine of prosperity and ease (for then we might suppose that benevolence or clemency might be the cause), but at the very time that they were suffering under the stroke of Divine vengeance.

Who, again, has been able to retain in obedience to his heavenly precepts, after so many successive storms of persecution, nay, in the very crisis of danger, so many persons throughout the world devoted to philosophy, and the service of God and those holy choirs of virgins who had dedicated themselves to a life of perpetual chastity and purity? Who taught them cheerfully to persevere in the exercise of protracted fasting, and to embrace a life of severe and consistent self-denial? Who has persuaded multitudes of either sex to devote themselves to the study of sacred things, and prefer to bodily nutriment that intellectual food which is suited to the wants of a rational soul? Who has instructed barbarians and peasants, yea, feeble women, slaves, and children, in short, unnumbered multitudes of all nations, to live in the contempt of death; persuaded of the immortality of their souls, conscious that human actions are observed by the unerring eye of justice, expecting God's award to the righteous and the wicked, and therefore true to the practice of a just and virtuous life? For they could not otherwise have persevered in the course of godliness. Surely these are the acts which our Saviour, and he alone, even now performs.

And now let us pass from these topics, and endeavor by inquiries such as these that follow to convince the objector's obdurate understanding. Come forward, then, whoever thou art, and speak the words of reason; utter, not the thoughts of a senseless heart, but those of an intelligent and enlightened mind; speak, I say, after deep solemn converse with thyself.

Who of the sages whose names have yet been known to fame, has ever been fore-known and proclaimed from the remotest ages, as our Saviour was by the prophetic oracles to the once divinely-favored Hebrew nation? But his very birth-place, the period of his advent the manner of his life, his miracles, and words and mighty acts, were anticipated and recorded in the sacred volumes of these prophets.

Again, who so present an avenger of crimes against himself; so that, as the immediate consequence of their impiety, the entire Jewish people were scattered by an unseen power, their royal seat utterly removed, and their very temple with its holy things levelled with the ground? Who, like our Saviour, has uttered predictions at once concerning that impious nation and the establishment of his church throughout the world, and has equally verified both by the event? Respecting the temple of these wicked men, our Saviour said: "Your house is left unto you desolate"; and, "There shall not be left one stone upon another in this place, that shall not be thrown down." And again, of his church he says: "I will build my church upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

How wondrous, too, must that power be deemed which summoned obscure and unlettered men from their fisher's trade, and made them the legislators and instructors of the human race! And how clear a demonstration of his deity do we find in the promise so well performed, that he would make them fishers of men; in the power and energy which he bestowed, so that they composed and published writings of such authority that they were translated into every civilized and barbarous language, were read and pondered by all nations, and the doctrines contained in them accredited as the oracles of God!

How marvelous his predictions of the future, and the testimony whereby his disciples were forewarned that they should be brought before kings and rulers, and should endure the severest punishments, not indeed as criminals, but simply for their confession of his name! Or who shall adequately describe the power with which he prepared them thus to suffer with a willing mind, and enabled them, strong in the armor of godliness, to maintain a constancy of spirit indomitable in the midst of conflict?

Or how shall we enough admire that steadfast firmness of soul which strengthened, not merely his immediate followers, but their successors

also, even to our present age, in the joyful endurance of every infliction, and every form of torture, in proof of their devotion to the Supreme God? Again, what monarch has prolonged his government through so vast a series of ages? Who else has power to make war after death, to triumph over every enemy, to subjugate each barbarous and civilized nation and city, and to subdue his adversaries with an invisible and secret hand?

Lastly, and chief of all, what slanderous lip shall dare to question that universal peace to which we have already referred; established by his power throughout the world? For thus the mutual concord and harmony of all nations coincided in point of time with the extension of our Saviour's doctrine and preaching in all the world; a concurrence of events predicted in long ages past by the prophets of God. The day itself would fail me, gracious emperor, should I attempt to exhibit in a single view those cogent proofs of our Saviour's Divine power which even now are visible in their effects; for no human being, in civilized or barbarous nations, has ever yet exhibited such power of Divine virtue as our Saviour.

But why do I speak of men, since of the beings whom all nations have deemed divine, none has appeared on earth with power like to his? If there has, let the fact now be proved. Come forward, ye philosophers, and tell us what god or hero has yet been known to fame, who has delivered the doctrines of eternal life and a heavenly kingdom as he has done who is our Saviour? Who, like him, has persuaded multitudes throughout the world to pursue the principles of Divine wisdom, to fix their hope on heaven itself, and look forward to the mansions there reserved for them that love God? What god or hero in human form has ever held his course from the rising to the setting sun, a course co-extensive as it were with the solar light, and irradiated mankind with the bright and glorious beams of his doctrine, causing each nation of the earth to render united worship to the One true God? What god or hero yet, as he has done, has set aside all gods and heroes among civilized or barbarous nations; has ordained that divine honors should be withheld from all, and claimed obedience to that command; and then, though singly conflicting with the power of all, has utterly destroyed the opposing hosts; victorious over the gods and heroes of every age, and causing himself alone, in every region of the habitable world, to be acknowledged by all people as the only Son of God?

Who else has commanded the nations inhabiting the continents and islands of this mighty globe to assemble weekly on the Lord's day, and to observe it as a festival, not indeed for the pampering of the body, but for the invigoration of the soul by instruction in Divine truth? What god or hero, exposed, as our Saviour was, to so sore a conflict, has raised the trophy of victory over every foe? For they indeed, from first to last, unceasingly assailed his doctrine and his people; but he who is invisible, by the exercise of a secret power, has raised his servants and the sacred houses of their worship to the height of glory.

15. But why should we still vainly aim at detailing those Divine proofs of our Saviour's power which no language can worthily express; which need indeed no words of ours, but themselves appeal in loudest tones to those whose mental ears are open to the truth? Surely it is a strange, a wondrous fact, unparalleled in the annals of human life; that the blessings we have described should be accorded to our mortal race, and that he who is in truth the only, the eternal Son of God, should thus be visible on earth.

Chapter XVIII.

These words of ours, however, [gracious] Sovereign, may well appear superfluous in your ears, convinced as you are, by frequent and personal experience, of our Saviour's Deity; yourself also, in actions still more than words, a herald of the truth to all mankind. Yourself, it may be, will vouchsafe at a time of leisure to relate to us the abundant manifestations which your Saviour has accorded you of his presence, and the oft-repeated visions of himself which have attended you in the hours of sleep. I speak not of those secret suggestions which to us are unrevealed; but of those principles which he has instilled into your own mind, and which are fraught with general interest and benefit to the human race. You will yourself relate in worthy terms the visible protection which your Divine shield and guardian has extended in the hour of battle; the ruin of your open and secret foes; and his ready aid in time of peril. To him you will ascribe relief in the midst of perplexity; defence in solitude; expedients in extremity; foreknowledge of events yet future; your forethought for the general weal; your power to investigate uncertain questions; your conduct

of most important enterprises; your administration of civil affairs; your military arrangements, and correction of abuses in all departments; your ordinances respecting public right; and, lastly, your legislation for the common benefit of all. You will, it may be, also detail to us those particulars of his favor which are secret to us, but known to you alone, and treasured in your royal memory as in secret storehouses. Such, doubtless, are the reasons, and such the convincing proofs of your Saviour's power, which caused you to raise that sacred edifice which presents to all, believers and unbelievers alike, a trophy of his victory over death, a holy temple of the holy God; to consecrate those noble and splendid monuments of immortal life and his heavenly kingdom; to offer memorials of our Almighty Saviour's conquest which well become the imperial dignity of him by whom they are bestowed. With such memorials have you adorned that edifice which witnesses of eternal life; thus, as it were in imperial characters, ascribing victory and triumph to the heavenly Word of God; thus proclaiming to all nations, with clear and unmistakable voice, in deed and word, your own devout and pious confession of his name.